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DEPARTURES AND RETURNS IN THE NORTH

PREFACE TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE

This special issue of the Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics is compiled on the basis of papers presented at the 3rd International Arctic Workshop of the University of Tartu, titled World Routes.[1] The aim of the workshop, held at the beginning of June 2012, was to bring together presentations that discuss the movement of people, physical objects, identities, ideas or the idea of movement in the context of the Arctic in a way that opens new horizons or initiates exciting discussions.

The Arctic is often seen as an isolated empty area covered with snow. However, the Arctic has been inhabited not just for centuries but for thousands of years. These inhabitants have been in constant movement. The Arctic is a region with huge distances where more or less everything needs to be constantly imported. This means that movement is more significant in the Arctic than in many other regions. The movement of people in different parts of the Arctic is linked with various environmental factors, changes in the economy, political processes, state policies and the movement of ideas, to name but a few. Apart from this, physical movement is often accompanied by identity shifts, the creation of new identities, the consolidation of existing ones or adaptation of new (*sibiriaki* in Siberia). These multiple factors and different modes of movement and identity change have – contrary to human movement in other continents of the world – received little continuous attention from scholars. Moreover, the movement of people in the Arctic is often studied as the movement of two separate groups, native and incomer populations, but we should see it as interconnected on different levels. Moreover, space and movement in the Arctic has found little analysis in a comparative perspective, whether as a comparison between different Arctic regions or with non-Arctic territories. The workshop wished to explore these and other aspects of movement. The main theoretical framework of the workshop was that the movement of people in the Arctic, both past and present, is multi-layered, has a complex background and content, and several initiators. We liked to discuss these different levels and aspects of movement in the Arctic. Herewith we do not limit discussion to one discipline, region, ethnic group or economic form (mode).

Similarly to earlier workshops,[2] presentation topics appeared to be rather diverse. As the organisers had proposed quite fluid subjects, scholars who gathered at the meeting interpreted the initial task in a variety of ways. This was in accord with the organising team's strategic plan, which was to inspire free academic interpretation of the concept of 'movement in the Arctic'.

In his paper "Coming Back to the Same Places: The Ethnography of Human-Reindeer Relations in the Northern Baikal Region", Vladimir Davydov analyses the results

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of his recent fieldwork among Evenk reindeer herders. Davydov challenges earlier Russian ethnographies that approached domestication as a one-time social event and demonstrates that complicated movements of animals and people make this social change ambivalent. Davydov presents a fascinating ethnography of how people try to facilitate reindeer return by feeding reindeer with salt, producing smoke that enables the reindeer to escape insects and binding calves to stakes and poles. On the one hand, animals periodically come back to a camp. On the other hand, reindeer herders know the places to which the animals return outside a camp, helping them to find reindeer. Davydov argues that one cannot claim that reindeer domestication in the northern Baikal is actually finalised but is a relative and on-going process.

Olga Povoroznyuk's article "Belonging to the Land in Tura: Reforms, Migrations, and Indentity Politics in Evenkia" aims to explore a different aspect of movement in the Arctic. The author demonstrates how the long-term influence of administrative reform, migration and cultural and identity construction policies have created a diverse pattern of territorial identity in the Evenk territories around Tura town in Central Siberia. Although the state reforms and indigenous policies have framed the indigenous identity construction processes, a sense of "belonging to land" can be distinguished as a major culture-specific factor that shapes vernacular identity narratives and discussions.

Patrik Lantto contributes to the Arctic movement topic with his discussion concerning indigenous land rights. His paper "The Consequences of State Intervention: Forced Relocations and Sámi Rights in Sweden, 1919–2012". Putting his arguments into the framework of international law (the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), Lantto explores the way in which forced relocations of Sámi in Sweden have affected the discussion on Sámi rights. The author elaborates on historical analyses of ideas and actions of national and regional authorities and the way the Sámi groups have acted in the long-term conflict that has developed.

A rather different approach to the problem of movement in the North is proposed by Aimar Ventsel in his paper "Sakha Music: Selling 'Exotic' Europeanness in Asia and Asianness in Europe". This article is focussed on various forms of Sakha music and how these different genres match the concepts of Europeanness or Asianness. Ventsel demonstrates how these categories are manipulated to produce success among audience of different natures and from different regions. In this processes, the geographical distance between the artist's origin and the audience plays the primary role by confirming the authenticity of the music. To offer the audience music by labelling it exotic is a strategy that Sakha artists use to market their music and earn income and prestige.

Laur Vallikivi's article "On the Edge of Space and Time: Evangelical Missionaries in the Tundra of Arctic Russia" is dedicated to the discussion of Protestant missionaries' conceptualisation of the coastal areas of the Nenets tundra in the biblical framework. According to Vallikivi, various missions and ideologies (Russian Orthodox, Communists, Evangelicals) have attempted to rearrange the worldview of the indigenous peoples in the North. Although agents of change have been driven by various agendas, from an ideological point of view they appear similar to the natives "in their search for productive edges, constructing 'remote' time-spaces, all these being woven into a major narrative in which the past and present are heroic and the future will be joyful" (p. 113). These utopianists have interpreted the northernmost areas of human habitation as the edge of space and time and concentrated on paying specific attention to efforts of change in these regions.

On his turn, Victor Shnirelman discusses the peculiar way in which some social groups in Russia construct a new national identity. In his article "Hyperborea: The Arctic Myth of Contemporary Russian Radical Nationalists", Shnirelman explores attempts by ethnic Russian nationalists to establish a "pure Russian country", or at least a Russian state in which ethnic Russians hold a privileged position. Shnirelman analyses the main features of the contemporary Russian Aryan myth developed by Russian radical intellectuals. These nationalists deny medieval and modern Russian history, saying instead these were periods of oppression implemented by "aliens". According to radical nationalists, Aryans are identified with the Slavs or Russians and are suffering from alien treachery and misdeeds. This myth is meant to replace former Marxist state ideology and contributes to an escalation of contemporary xenophobia in Russia.

Topics touched upon in this special issue include spatial movement in the taiga, territorial identity claims, forced relocations, the movement of music in the north, biblical motivation of missionary practices, identity changes and the northern dimension of the ideology of national radicals. In a more abstract vein, these themes cover discussions of real movement practices, imaginary geography and the Arctic component of global movement trends. This collective intellectual effort is concerned with interpretation of the ways in which real, imaginary and metaphorical journeys are combined.

Particular movement actions always include the potential to evolve into a more general cognition of environment and an abstract sense of place and space (see Ingold 2011: 147–148). As the aim of our workshop was rather broad and all participants were able to elaborate on the northern movement concept through their own analytical routes and associations, a shared conceptual framework can be detected at the end, at the level of theoretical abstraction. This does not mean that our workshops did not have a distinctive focus. The first workshop was more ethnographically centred, the second concentrated on metaphorical discussions, while the third articulated most distinctively the contradictory nature of practices, ideologies and perceptions of movement in the Arctic. The third workshop also changed the spatial dimension: while earlier meetings focused mainly on Siberia, in the last one several presentations focused on Scandinavia.

Feeling about the Arctic as a source for the production of specific cultural traits is most distinctively expressed in abstract, distant ideological approaches. But as human existence is bound to place to a certain degree (see Ingold 2011: 148–149), it is reasonable to explore specific geographical dimension of culture. As places and areas are huge and connections somehow vague in the Arctic, movement may be a more fruitful concept on which to concentrate (cf. Ingold 2011: 149–153). The nature of movement differs according to whether it is physical movement, conceptual, illusory, or whether it is initiated by an outside force or planned and calculated by the person him- or herself. Several presentations demonstrated that distance and movement often define place and its image. Movement makes abstract theoretical effort intriguing in regard to the Arctic, as space and people can be connected to distinctive traditions, cultures and social groups through specifically peculiar movement patterns. It is rather complicated to reconstruct other people's engagement with their native places and landscapes, as well as movement-related identity because of "the complex feelings of affinity and self-assurance one feels" (Lopez 1986: 255).

Intellectual perception of the North is challenged by cognitive "preconceptions and desire" (Lopez 1986: 257). This puzzle of feelings thoroughly penetrates our scholarly

efforts even if we do not recognise any special excitement while travelling or thinking about the Arctic. Scientists may become used to the North and the initial emotional motivation silenced, although despite this a background of feelings is present in the research. Thinking about movement may be one possible motivation that directs us away from a vague cognitive pattern of the Arctic as a mystic space.

We hope that this collection of papers inspires scholars studying the Arctic or movement-related cultural practices. Although this special issue is paradoxically diverse, presenting a thematic and conceptual plurality of approaches to Arctic movement, a certain unity can be detected in the overall treatment of this theme. This coherence occurs in the cognitive conformity of this multiplicity with cultural reality that does not allow itself to be caught in its actual totality. However, there are certain ways to reflect this unrealisable Artic dream.

Art Leete
Editor of the Special Issue

Aimar Ventsel
Guest editor of the Special Issue

NOTES

1 The workshop and this paper were supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory, CECT).

2 About earlier workshops, see Leete, Ventsel 2011; 2012.

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COMING BACK TO THE SAME PLACES: THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF HUMAN-REINDEER RELATIONS IN THE NORTHERN BAIKAL REGION

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ABSTRACT
This article* is based on the results of recent fieldwork among the Evenk reindeer herders in the northern Baikal region. It argues that reindeer domestication should be approached as a never-ending process that happens in the context of animal and human movement and can be described as domestication-in-practice and domestication-on-the-move. An important signal of the fact that animals became closer to people is their constant return to a camp. This article presents the ethnography of how people try to facilitate these returns by feeding reindeer with salt, producing smoke and binding calves to stakes and poles. On the one hand, animals periodically come back to a camp. On the other hand, reindeer herders know the places to which the animals return outside the camp and this helps them to find reindeer in certain places. Reindeer herding in the northern Baikal region is based on constant relocation of the herd from place to place, implying daily short-term movement in order to bring animals to the camp and meaning a continuous monitoring of reindeer and predator movements.

KEYWORDS: human-animal relations • reindeer domestication • northern Baikal reindeer herders • mobility • Evenk native village

INTRODUCTION

This article is based on fieldwork I did in the northern Baikal region in July–August 2012 and includes some observations I made between 2007 and 2009 and during short visits in 2013. The purpose of this research was to document socio-ecological relationships and to investigate local categories of 'domestic' and 'wild' reindeer. In 2012 the fieldwork was conducted in 3 main locations: the village of Kholodnoye Evenkiyskoye,[1]

* I want to express my sincere gratitude to the European Research Council (ADG 295458 Arctic Domus) which supported my fieldwork in the northern Baikal region in 2012–2013. I owe much to the reindeer herders with whom I worked and lived during my fieldwork. I am eternally grateful to Dr. David Anderson, Dr. Dmitry Arzyutov, Dr. Peter Loovers, Dr. Konstantin Klokov and Dr. Donatas Brandišauskas for interesting discussions on the topic of reindeer domestication. I would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments.

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which is located 18 kilometres northeast of Lake Baikal in the territories of the Uluki *obshchina*[2] (communal organisation); in the reindeer herders' camp near the mouth of the Nomama River about 70 kilometres from Kholodnoye; and at the abandoned former geologists' village of Pereval, which is now used as a central base by the Oron *obshchina* and is located 45 kilometres from that village.

According to the data provided by the local administration, as of the 1st August 2012, the population of Kholodnoye and two neighbouring small settlements Dushkachan and Turtukit was 436, including 183 Evenks. Kholodnoye (Ev. Niandarakan) was part the Soviet administration's project designed to 'sedentarise' Kindigir Evenk reindeer herders and hunters (Zabelin 1930: 55). Historically the village was central to state megaprojects such as the Complex Geological Survey and the construction of the Baikal-Amur Railway (BAM), which seriously affected reindeer herding in the region. The BAM construction project took place between 1976 and 1984 and attracted a new population of newcomers (*bamovtsy*) to the region. Later on, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the closing the Severnyi (northern) sovkhoz the number of reindeer in the Severobaikalsk Rayon considerably decreased. Reindeer herding almost disappeared here in the 1990s, but was gradually re-established in the 2000s. Today people keep reindeer in 3 *obshchiny*: in the Uluki and Oron *obshchiny* in Kholodnoye and the Plotnikovy brothers' *obshchina* in Staryi Uoyan. In 2011 reindeer herds started decreasing again. Thus, in 2010, the Uluki *obshchina* possessed about 600 reindeer, while in mid-July 2012 I counted 153 reindeer, and at the beginning of August 2012 there were only 118 animals left. The Oron *obshchina* is in a similar situation: in autumn 2007 there were 43 reindeer, in summer 2009 37 reindeer (Kharinskiy 2010: 19), and in the mid-august 2012 they had only 6 she-deer without bulls. In April 2014 the Oron *obshchina* purchased 18 reindeer in the Kalarsk Rayon in the Zabaikal Krai. The Plotnikovy brothers started to breed reindeer in 2011 when they purchased 5 she-deer and 5 bulls from the Uluki *obshchina*. As I heard in Kholodnoye, in spring 2013 their number had increased to 17.

There is a long history of human-reindeer relations in the northern Baikal region. Historical sources contain information that shows the northern Baikal Evenks used to move with their reindeer long ago: they employed reindeer to transport belongings, women, children and the infirm (Radde 1858: 42–43). Petr Shimkevich (1894: 5) accurately observed that northern Baikal male hunters preferred to move with the reindeer on skis. Aleksey Alekseyevich Ganyiugin confirmed that the Kindigir Evenks did not load a reindeer with more than fifty kilograms. He further stressed along with local elders that Kindigir male hunters never rode reindeer, although it was common practice among the neighbouring groups of Evenks. Aleksey Alekseyevich explained that Kindigir Evenk adult males never rode reindeer because they considered it to be shameful for a man. (Fieldnotes 2007a) He remembered that an old reindeer herder called Simorchin said that Kindigir men even crossed rivers on foot (Fieldnotes 2013a).

Another point to make is that northern Baikal Evenk reindeer herders historically did not use a sledge in their movements: the Shamagir Evenk adapted it at the end of the 19th or beginning of the 20th century from the Yakuts, who used sledges near the Lena River (Levin 1936: 73). However, in this case, the northern Baikal Evenks mainly adapted sledges for flat places. For instance, they started to use them in order to move on the ice of Baikal. Today, they perceive sledges as a traditional element. During the late Soviet period, sledge races between reindeer herders on the ice of the Lake became

an element of the Feast of the North (*Prazdnik Severa*) in early spring. In the 2000s, reindeer herders employed sledges to entertain tourists. In this sense, Evenk reindeer herders pragmatically and constructively adapted a lot of new elements from neighbouring groups and newcomers (Vasilyevich 1969: 101).

Starting from the end of the 18th century, reindeer were gradually incorporated into industrial development projects as a transport resource. Reindeer transport was very important for the geological exploration of the region. Aleksey Alekseyevich Ganyugin said that in the 1960s and the 1970s reindeer porters (*kaiury*) usually used a team of 5 reindeer because of the broken ground. In some cases they walked up to the mountains with 3 reindeer, leaving the other animals at the foot of a mountain and returning to take them later. At the same time in other regions a *kaiury* might use 10 reindeer in a caravan. (Fieldnotes 2007a) According to Nikolay Tulbukonov, local *kaiury* never loaded a reindeer with more than 50 kilos (Fieldnotes 2007b).

Generally, the Soviet attitude towards reindeer herding in the region steadily shifted to a more 'industrial' form in which every animal was supposed to be counted and measured (Habeck 2005: 76). This logic was based on the hierarchical view, neglecting a more intimate inter-species approach and presenting reindeer as if they were not associated with people but stayed rather separated. Moreover, the Soviet administrators saw animals and people as attached to certain places, such as reindeer farms. However, reindeer numbers were always an object of manipulation and the data of the rayon administration rarely presented the exact picture. In a similar manner, contemporary reindeer herders report more reindeer than they actually have in order to receive the special state subsidy for she-deer. They have not reported the decrease of reindeer that has happened within the last 3 years to the official authorities.

The Soviet planners also experimented with 'wild' animals through the introduction of polar fox farms – a factory-like fur production enterprise that they expected would be a 'sedentary' alternative to hunting. In many cases they ignored the fact that human-reindeer relations were linked to a number of places rather than to any single point associated with reindeer farms. Furthermore, the human-reindeer relationship was a mobile one, taking both to places such as summer and winter pastures, calving, and rutting territories.

Russian ethnographers saw domestication as a sudden event rather than a long process and described it as something achieved in the remote past (Vasilyevich, Levin 1951; Vainshtein 1971). Furthermore, their accounts often omitted the fact that people had certain relations with animals and the landscape, and stated that the northern Baikal Evenk keep reindeer in an a 'more sedentary' manner (Kirilov 1894a: 548; 1894b: 9). In this sense, they saw people, animals, landscape and structures as fixed and separate objects of research, and, therefore, did not take into consideration the importance of movement in the process of reindeer domestication. However, people were not separated from animals, either ontologically or spatially. Rather they were with the reindeer, they moved together with them. Domestication is not something that is finished, and neither is it fixed. It is not a result; it is a process through which the proximity of humans and animals constantly changes. It is always domestication-on-the-move. To be and to move with animals was a normal condition of daily life for Evenk reindeer herders. The reindeer farm, as a unit of the kolkhoz, was never located in one certain place; people constantly relocated it to new places. Therefore, it was not a geographical

point, but rather it meant a certain kind of human-reindeer relationship on the move from place to place with periodic returns to the same places. Yet, the role of movements in the process of domestication was poorly documented by ethnographers. This article stresses the role of periodic short-term returns to the same places in the process of domestication.

Soviet administrators reproduced a paradigm of human dominance and approached reindeer not as "companions" or "partners" for people (Vitebsky 2005) but rather as "tools" or "transport" they employed to move (Kishkintsev 1929: 17). In this context, the Soviet administration perceived numbers as more important than any personal characteristics the reindeer may have had. This article aims to show how reindeer can be perceived as partners that have their own names and distinctive characters; it will also analyse the process of domestication in the context of practical engagement of humans and animals where they all periodically come back to the same places.

THE CATEGORISATION AND PERSONALISATION OF REINDEER

Even though Soviet administrators saw a reindeer herd as a homogenous mass, the reindeer herders perceived it as composed of animals with distinctive characters and habits (Stépanoff 2012: 302). As Alexandra Lavrillier (2012: 126) argues, the Evenk perceive animals not as a uniform whole, rather they make several levels of differentiation within the animal realm. Therefore, the domestication of animal involves vernacular categorisation and the naming of animals. Northern Baikal reindeer herders distinguish many different types of domestic reindeer depending on the animal's sex, age, character and colour. In northern Baikal people use many different categories of reindeer. I recorded the following Evenk words from Praskovya Platonovna Lekareva (Fieldnotes 2013b):

oron – domestic reindeer
baiun – wild reindeer
boiunchikan or *baiunchukan* – a reindeer which has a 'domestic' mother and a 'wild' father
*uucha*g – working reindeer
gilge – castrated reindeer
botalohet – a reindeer with a bell (from the Russian word *botalo*)
engnakan – a small calf
multakan – a one-year-old male reindeer
songachan – a young she-deer
sachari or *sacharikan* – a one-year-old she-deer
niami – an adult working she-deer
iktane – a three-year-old male reindeer
umiri – a she-deer that will not calve this year
sagdaku – an old reindeer
bagdarin or *bagdama* – a white reindeer that is considered a sacred animal
kongnorin – a black reindeer

Most of these words are still in use in Kholodnoye. According to informants, all these

words are very important when remembering certain animals. Sometimes these words can be used as personal names for the reindeer.

I remember from my visits to Nomama between 2007 and 2009 that many reindeer in the Uluki *obshchina*, and all the animals in the Oron *obshchina*, had personal names. I recorded the names Utolkan, Bichara, Malofeyev, Terroristka, Khokhol, Gonka and Gevchaka. Most of these names repeated the names and nicknames of people in Kholodnoye. Reindeer herders often gave reindeer the names of real people when they saw the similarities in behaviour and appearance. This is slightly different to the approach in southern Yakutia and Zabaikalye, where reindeer herders usually give reindeer the name of a former owner.

In summer 2012, the situation with reindeer names changed dramatically. When I visited the Oron *obshchina*, I was really surprised that only one she-deer of the six had a name. All the other reindeer I saw in 2009, which had names, had been killed by wolves. In 2012 the reindeer did not have names because Georgiy Lekarev, who knew their names, moved to the Uluki *obshchina* and Aleksey Popov and Leonid Tulbukonov had left Uluki and joined Oron *obshchina*. As they explained, they did not perceive themselves as owners of the reindeer with which they worked. They said that they were looking after reindeer belonging to the head of the *obshchina*. Aleksey Tulbukonov commented on this situation: "There was no actual need up to now to give names to these reindeer. We can give a name at any time if we need to." He explained that he could see differences in their colour and behaviour and remember reindeer even without the names: "Thus, one of them has a knob-nose, another is white and has a collar". (Fieldnotes 2012d)

The same year most reindeer in the Uluki *obshchina* were nameless, and reindeer herders were unable to reconstruct their biographies. According to Yuriy Chernoyev, many reindeer were lost, with wolves killing most of them: "Utolkan disappeared last year. We did not manage to find him." (Fieldnotes 2012e) Georgiy Lekarev gave names only to the calves which appeared after he had joined the Uluki *obshchina*. These names often repeated a name or a surname of particular people in Kholodnoye, for instance Bukidaika, or emphasised the colour of a calf: Pestryi (Mottled), Ryzhik or Ryzhiy (Ginger). One of the calves received the name Chulok (Stocking) because he was black and had white legs. Sometimes a reindeer has several variants of a name. For instance, Georgiy often called Bukidaika both Raskosaya (Slanting) and Buroglazka (Brown-eyed). The name Bukidaika derives from the surname Bukidayeva which belonged to a woman from Kholodnoye. Georgiy gave this name to the young deer because he found it and this woman had similar eyes.

People perceive animals as mindful beings. Reindeer herders speak to reindeer and dogs. Thus, Praskovya Lekareva from Kholodnoye advised me to speak to her small black dog Artamoshka when it was barking: "You have to speak to him. Say 'Artamoshka, Artamoshka'. He will get used to you." (Fieldnotes 2013b) During my stay at a reindeer herders' camp near the Nomama River Pavel Atolaynen recommended that I speak to the reindeer when I brought firewood to make smoke. He said that they can be scared of people, but they recognise the reindeer herders' voices when they talk – they are used to hearing people. I observed that when Pavel approached the reindeer, he usually talked to them. For instance, when he brought moss and branches with leaves to the calf, which was bond to a stake, he usually greeted him with the words:

"Dinner time. Please, enjoy your meal." Pavel also recommended not moving too fast between the reindeer. Reindeer herders emphasised that in contrast to dogs, reindeer never recognise their names. At the same time people believe they are used to certain sounds. People usually call reindeer with a long sound "E-e-e-e-e" and by repeating "Mot-mot-mot".

People become emotionally attached to reindeer. According to Georgiy Lekarev, he starts to think about the reindeer when he leaves the herd and he imagines the animals when he closes his eyes (Fieldnotes 2012a). I heard from several reindeer herders that they became attached to reindeer, think about them all the time and keep in mind their probable location. Georgiy said that every reindeer has its own face. He used the word 'face' (*litso*) instead of 'muzzle' (*morda*). Georgiy continued: "All reindeer looked the same to newcomers. But I see that all their faces are different." (Fieldnotes 2012a)

The study of animal life histories was a difficult task in Kholodnoye in summer 2012. Most reindeer herders left their job in *obshchiny* for some time and the new workers started to reconstruct animal biographies by looking at the animals' personal characteristics. Pavel Atolaynen did not work in the herd for many years, but he started to recognise which animals had 'a bad character' and needed particular attention immediately. He knew which animals usually lead the herd and gave names to animals that needed particular care and special attention. For instance, a young white deer whose head was bitten by a wolf received the name Gorbonosaya (Knob-nosed). Therefore, naming of reindeer often reflects practical things. People often name an animal they have a close relationship with and which needs particular attention.

LOCAL DISCOURSES OF 'WILD' AND 'DOMESTIC'

I asked people in Kholodnoye how they approached the difference between the categories 'wild' and 'domestic'. It was apparent that they are relative categories, which suggest one should avoid constructing a binary opposition of 'wild' and 'domestic' reindeer. On the one hand, Tungus-speaking reindeer herders can easily differentiate 'wild' reindeer (Ev. *baiun*) and 'domestic' reindeer (Ev. *oron*) (Vasilyevich 1964; Myreyeva 2001: 12, 28; Willerslev, Ulturgasheva 2012: 53). These herders say that a wild reindeer usually has a much longer head and longer legs, and emphasise that the difference is especially obvious in autumn when wild reindeer have very fat necks and a thick hide. Georgiy Lekarev said that this change in a wild reindeer's hide makes it very difficult to process. In summer 2012 he planned to produce a lasso (Ev. *maut*) from a wild hide:

> I defatted it. Yakha had brought this skin. I left it in a barrel with water for one week. However this June was very cold. I planned to make a lasso from it. Yet it would be more productive to do this work in a pair – the skin needs to be cut, stretched and twisted. (Fieldnotes 2012a)

On the other hand, some animals are considered to be 'wilder' than others and people call them wild reindeer. According to local informants, today's reindeer have become 'wilder' because their diet is different. Previously people used combined feed, which attracted reindeer to return to the same place. According to Kholodnintsy, people in the Oron *obshchina* did not pay attention to the reindeer and so they started to become

'wilder', returning less often to the central base. They realised that reindeer herders always face the risk that the reindeer may become wilder. At the same time, as Stépanoff (2012: 290) has emphasised, "the paradox of reindeer herding is that, compared to other domesticated species, *humans can domesticate reindeer only if they keep them (in the) wild*" (original emphasis).

Reindeer are surrounded by other species and people usually employ their knowledge of other animals when they talk about reindeer. Domestication is on-going process which cannot be reduced to one universal model. For instance, Uilta from Sakhalin Island compares domesticated reindeer with dogs (Fieldnotes 2013c). Evenk from southern Yakutia and northern Zabaikalye usually compare tamed animals with cows (Fieldnotes 2013d). In a similar manner, one Evenk informant from northern Buryatia, Lyubov Bashkirova said:

> It is very important to define what we understand by 'wild'. In my opinion, a cow is a domestic animal. She lives close to household and people have to prepare hay. A reindeer is not a domestic animal. This animal moves through different places searching for cup moss. (Fieldnotes 2012b)

Then she concluded that a reindeer is "a wild animal which is accustomed to people" (ibid.). At the same time, if a reindeer returns to people or takes food from herders' hands, it may be compared with a cow. I observed that some reindeer used to eat bread from people's hands.

In the northern Baikal region the herders interbreed wild and domestic reindeer (Kharinskiy 2010; Fieldnotes 2012a; 2012e). My informants emphasised that a reindeer which has a 'domestic' mother and a 'wild' father may be 'fully domesticated' and its behaviour would not be different from others. Some informants consider these reindeer to be stronger than domestic ones (Povoroznyuk 2011: 45). At the same time I have observed that people pay special attention to these 'half-wild' (*poludikiy*) reindeer. This practice is common for many groups of Evenk, however the number of these 'semi-wild' reindeer in the herds is usually small (Sirina 2012: 228). Informants call these calves *baiunchukany* (Ev.) or calves of 'wild reindeer' breed (*baiunchey porody*). According to Georgiy Lekarev, many calves who were born in May 2012 where from this category and they were especially strong. Georgiy said that the strongest calves are born in May and the late calves from June and July rarely survive. (Fieldnotes 2012a) Local people may define a *baiunchukan* both through its behaviour and through its appearance. These reindeer usually have a knob nose, long and thin legs and a wild (*dikovatyi*) character. At the reindeer herders' camp at Pereval, I saw a 3-years-old she-deer that had been named Gorbonosaya (Knob-nosed), emphasising her 'kin relations' with wild reindeer (Photo 1). In this case this nickname served as a rationalisation of control. Due to this 'blood relationship' she was a reindeer that needed particular attention. This nickname helped reindeer herders to reference her and to exchange the necessary information.

The treatment of calves born from wild reindeer may vary (Povoroznyuk 2007: 140). Even though some reindeer herders confirmed that if people pay particular attention to a *baiunchikan* it will be no different from other domestic reindeer, Praskovya Lekareva considered that, "a wild reindeer will remain wild anyway" (*Dikiy vse ravno dikarem ostayetsya*). She remembered that most *baiunchikany* were wilder than other reindeer. She said that Arkadiy Petrovich Lekarev, who worked in the 1950s as the direc-

Photo 1. Knob-nosed reindeer. Pereval, August 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

tor of reindeer farm in Kholodnoye, was very nervous in autumn when wild reindeer approached the herd. They might kill domestic reindeer and impregnate domestic she-deer. According to Praskovya Lekareva, reindeer herders were very angry when she-deer bore calves from wild reindeer: "Again a wild reindeer has just been born!" (*Opyat' dikiy rodilsya!*) (Fieldnotes 2013b)

In autumn herders may use domestic reindeer in order to lure and hunt wild reindeer (Kharinskiy 2010: 191). Herders sometimes also use the strategy of creating the impression of a 'wilderness', for instance by using domesticated reindeer to be mistaken for wild reindeer. Both in the Oron and Uluki *obschiny* herders specially prepared a reindeer and put it in the forest in a certain place in order to satisfy tourists' desire to shoot wild reindeer, although this happens rarely.

DOMESTICATION AS A PROCESS

'Wild' and 'domestic' are not static categories. Rather, we can speak only about a degree of wildness or domestication. The domestication of reindeer is an on-going and never-

*Photo 2. The wooden feeding-rack (*kormushka). *Nomama, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.*

ending process. Herders have to invest a lot of effort for a reindeer to become accustomed, and return, to the same places. One of the purposes of my current research in the northern Baikal area is the documentation of domestication technologies. My particular interest is in what strategies people use to get reindeer to and from the same places. Constant return to the same place is an important signal of reindeer domestication. In order to facilitate these returns people use strategies such as feeding reindeer with salt, binding calves to stakes and poles, producing smoke (Ev. *somnin*). Reindeer herders believe that if people stop looking after reindeer, these animals can become 'wild' again. They tell stories about Staryi Uoyan village, where people stopped looking after the reindeer after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As a consequence, animals were lost in the forest and were absolutely wild when herders from Kholodnoye tried to catch them.

First of all, reindeer herders emphasised the importance of salt. As reindeer herders say, "only domestic reindeer are used to eating salt from the hand and constantly return to people". (Fieldnotes 2012a) People give salt to reindeer by hand and place it in special long wooden feeding racks (*kormushka*) (Photo 2), or put it onto tree stumps. Georgiy Lekarev said that when he worked in Sredniy Kalar he did not use feeding racks, but threw salt at bases of trees (Fieldnotes 2012a). According to Charles Stépanoff (2012) use of salt has a strong influence on reindeer behaviour. Working among Tozhu reindeer herders in the Sayan Mountains in southern Siberia, he observed that, "in the camp of a poor herder who had run out of salt, his reindeer did not come back for several days running, while some reindeer came back to the settlements of other herders who gave out salt every morning" (Stépanoff 2012: 292–293).

Reindeer herders also stressed the importance of human urine in the process of domestication in winter: "Reindeer like salt, and urine is salty, and that is why they liked it" (Fieldnotes 2012a). An informant even thinks that reindeer domestication started when large groups of people migrated from place to place and saw that reindeer visited the places where they usually went to the toilet.

Secondly, reindeer herders stressed the significance of binding reindeer to stakes (*stolbiki*, *kolyshki*), structures and trees. People believe that keeping calves bound can make young reindeer closer to people. Generally the same practice is common for small cows near the village. In 2012 Georgiy Lekarev used 17 stakes near the reindeer herders' camp at Nomama to bind calves. In the interview he said that he learned this practice when he had being working as a reindeer herder in Srednіy Kalar in the Zabaikal Krai (region), where he had been for about 10 years. According to Georgiy, there were about 40 calves in the herd. (Fieldnotes 2012a) This means he simultaneously bound half of the new-born calves. The poles he used were placed in the soil for that purpose. They were about 50 centimetres long and located 7–10 metres apart. At the same time they were located rather close to the place where people lived and cooked their food. Georgiy Lekarev employs these stakes to bind calves only in May and June. He used them in order that calves became tame and in order that the she-deer constantly return to them. He alternated binding calves with binding the she-deer. According to Aleksey Tulbukonov, who left the *obshchina* in 2012, he had also used these stakes in 2011. He confirmed that people kept calves bound at the beginning of the 2000s, but later when he started working in Uluki *obshchina* they neglected this practice for some time and then started it again in 2011. I did not observe any stakes in the Nomama River camp, either in 2007 or in 2009. Aleksey Tulbukonov added that they never bond she-deer during the calving period. (Fieldnotes 2012d)

The trope of kin relations or mother-child relations is very important here (Photo 3). Reindeer herders observe mother-calf relations and see when a calf or its mother is lost. They call some she-deer bad mothers when they occasionally lose their 'children'. This is especially relevant for she-deer when they have their first calves. Georgiy emphasised that reindeer that were bond to stakes became slightly less wild. He said that he used the same strategy when he worked in the Oron *obshchina* in the 2000s: "I bound them by turns – I bound she-deer during the night and calves during the day. Then I went away from there. And they [reindeer herders from the Oron *obshchina*] do not bind reindeer at all." (Fieldnotes 2012a) Aleksey Tulbukonov who worked in the *obshchina* in 2011 confirmed that he bound calves and she-deer by turns (Fieldnotes 2012d). However, in his case the temporal structure was different to Georgiy's: Aleksey bound she-deer, releasing young deer during the day and binding them for the night. He continued that in 2011 he bound only some of the young calves: "There were about 30 young deer last year. However, it is very difficult to catch those that have grown up. We bound these calves for a period less than one month." (Fieldnotes 2012a) In a similar manner, Tozhu reindeer herders recognise that the operation of tying up calves is quite tiring, although they also aware that "this critical time has a strong influence on the further development of the reindeer" (Stépanoff 2012: 294).

In 2012, Georgiy stopped binding young deer to stakes at the beginning of July because the number of biting insects had increased. I observed that in July and August reindeer herders bound only those reindeer that were ill or traumatised by wolves.

Photo 3. A calf bonded to a pole. Nomama, beginning of July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

Reindeer herders kept one young reindeer, who got the name Goshin Syn (Son of Gosha), for more than one month because he had injured a hoof. When herders bound an animal for more than 24 hours they had to bring water, cup moss and branches with leaves. However, cup moss near the camp was very poor. Therefore, the reindeer herders had to bring it in bags attached to on an Evenk rucksack – consisting of a plank with many ropes on the sides (Ev. *poniaga*) – from places located from 1 to 2 kilometres from the camp. The *poniaga* is a very simple tool to produce, but I have observed that people use it for many years. People believe that it can bring luck (*fartovaya*) in hunting. Georgiy Lekarev used his *poniaga* with care; he brought it from the central base of the Oron *obshchina* in Pereval: "My *poniaga* is in field condition (*boyevaya*). I have being walking with it since I had found a piece of plywood at Pereval in 2002!" (Fieldnotes 2012a) Pavel Atolaynen brought cup moss for Goshyn Syn on a *poniaga* every 2 days. Moreover, Pavel changed water for this young deer several times per day and brought him fresh branches with leaves from the shore of the river every day. He attached these branches by binding them to a small stake in order that the young deer did not throw them about. I saw that Goshin Syn usually recognised Pavel and was not afraid of him at all. Moreover, this young deer was fed by his mother. He had been bound for almost one month when I left the camp. Reindeer herders were afraid to release him because of the increased number of wolves and bears.

Another important technique for making reindeer return to a camp is the use of smoke (Photo 4), although this is only effective in the summer (Stépanoff 2012: 292). David Anderson et al. (2014) emphasise the importance of accounting for the agency of

Photo 4. Georgiy Lekarev and a calf near a smudge (dymokur). *Nomama, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.*

wind in ordering reindeer behaviour. In summer the reindeer usually return to smoke if there is dry weather and no wind. They will stay near the source of the smoke from early morning until evening and sometimes make small rounds searching for grass, cup moss and foliage on bushes. If there are many biting insects around, they return to the same place rather quickly. The reindeer herders' camp near the mouth of the Nomama River was designed for a much larger herd than I observed in summer 2012. For instance, in August 2009, when there were about 600 reindeer, people used 4 smoke fires. Aleksey Tulbukonov confirmed that he used 4 fires simultaneously (2 main and 2 additional) in 2011 (Fieldnotes 2012d). In 2012 Georgiy Lekarev, Pavel Atolaynen and Pavel Chernoyev used only 1 or 2 fires simultaneously. People extracted the fuel for the fires nearby. First of all they dig out a small hollow in the ground, then put two damp logs into the centre and cover them with spruce branches, then set a fire and cover it with moss. People look after the fire in order not to let it to die and not to allow an open fire. In order to make good smoke, the moss should be wet. If the moss is dry the fire can easily burn the skin of any reindeer trying to escape biting insects nearby. At the end of July I witnessed how a calf burned his skin when laying too close to an open fire. To avoid this, the reindeer herders construct special wooden tripods. There is the evidence from the archival sources that people used the same constructions in the 1920s (Kuftin 1927: 25).

Reindeer herders try to check the smoke every hour. They usually move the logs and bring new fuel if necessary. Pavel Atolaynen who taught me how to make smoke correctly said that a reindeer herder should always watch the intensity of the fire in order

to keep the fuel burning slowly. Reindeer herders often have to walk in the forest searching firewood and moss. As I understand from my experience, people used heavy trucks to bring firewood. However, in 2012 all of them were broken and reindeer herders had to bring firewood on a *poniaga* (Photo 5). Its weight with firewood can reach 20–30 kilograms and people have to walk for about a half kilometre in order to find proper wet firewood for smoke, and dry wood to heat the log cabin and for cooking. People usually keep a stock of moss and firewood not far from the fire. They replenish this every 2–3 days. Herders try to keep the stock wet by covering them with a large tar paper sheet. In order to bring large amounts of this stock to the fire herders from the Uluki *obshchina* constructed a litter from a sheet of metal and two planks, suitable for two people. Pavel Atolaynen attracted my attention to the fact that reindeer usually lay near smoke when there is a breeze and may walk intensively around the fire if there is windless weather in order to 'make their own wind' (Photo 6). He commented that reindeer use round movements to better spread the smoke. Blackflies force reindeer to return to the same place (the source of the smoke) in the summer. It would be rather difficult to keep reindeer in one particular place if there were no blackflies in summer: when the blackflies rise, reindeer return to the smoke. (Fieldnotes 2012f)

Photo 5. Pavel Atolaynen brings firewood on a poniaga. *Nomama, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.*

Reindeer herding involves a great deal of walking. People walk many kilometres per day in order to check the herd and bring reindeer to the camp. The ordinary situation is that only one or two reindeer herders stay with the reindeer in camp and never leave the reindeer alone for too long. Georgiy Lekarev worked in a pair with his uncle Aleksey Tulbukonov, or with hunter Vladimir Agdyreyev. Between 2007 and 2009, the reindeer were supervised by Aleksey Tulbukonov and a Russian hunter, Anatoliy Shishmarev.

Reindeer herders are skilful in observing their animals' movements. They constantly try to keep in mind the direction in which they can find the reindeer. It is especially important to monitor the directions of reindeer movements in the autumn, during the rut. The herders say that 'wild' bulls sometimes take away domestic she-deer and that these she-deer might not return to the herders. In winter, reindeer herders usually follow reindeer tracks in order to find their reindeer.

Reindeer rarely walk as a whole herd. In most cases they spread out over the river valley and walk as small groups consisting of 20 to 40 reindeer. One of the most difficult tasks for reindeer herders is to bring these small groups back, especially if there is a

Photo 6. Reindeer are 'making their own wind'. Nomama, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

lack of people. If reindeer left the smoke fires in small groups, herders try to remember the directions in which they left. In this case sound is very important. I have observed that northern Baikal reindeer herders attached a bell (Ev. *botal*) to a calm she-deer or to a castrated reindeer and try to remember the directions of reindeer movements by listening to these bells. Moreover, bells are usually attached to dominant reindeer, and the other reindeer recognise the sound of this bell and follow these reindeer (Stépanoff 2012: 301). In the morning, usually from 5 to 7 o'clock, the sound of a bell signified that reindeer had returned; this was therefore the time to set the fires. In 2009, I observed that people kept 4 castrated reindeer (Ev. *gilge*) in the herd, but in mid-July 2012 wolves killed 3 of them and the last one was slaughtered. At that time I observed only 2 she-deer with bells.

Therefore, the return of animals to the same places is an important part of the domestication process. The success of this process is based on the creation of different structures and the use of particular strategies that facilitate the animals' return to particular locations. Thus, returning to the same place is not a consequence of domestication. Rather, they constitute a process that takes place within these short-term movements, which implies relatively quick return to the same geographical points.

LANDSCAPES OF REINDEER HERDING

Human-reindeer relations were never attributed to one particular place. Domestication as a process involves the use of particular places and movement between them. Evenk

reindeer herders create their living spaces through "their use of landscapes for subsistence that is inseparable from their movements and maintenance paths as well as for the success of interactions with animals and other non-human beings" (Brandišauskas 2012: 10). My particular interest was how people use their knowledge about particular parts of landscape in reindeer herding.

The fieldwork in the northern Baikal region has shown that reindeer herders use the landscape pragmatically. For instance, the oldest woman in Kholodnoye, Praskovya Platonova, said that long ago the Evenk did not construct fences in the mountains. She explained that in the mountainous river valleys they simply did not need fences. (Fieldnotes 2009) In other words, local reindeer herders employed parts of the landscape instead of stationary structures. They used mountainous ridges as natural fences, restricting the movements of reindeer. Local people still use a special term 'narrow places' (*uzkiye mesta*) in relation to the valleys located between two ridges. It is much easier to see which direction reindeer move from a camp than on the plane. One of these 'narrow places' is located on the upper reaches of the Gasan-Diakit River. As Yakov Shangin, who showed me the way to this narrow valley, said, people used these pastures after the Second World War.

In Kholodnoye I observed that animals have a certain freedom of movement. This reflects the local ethics of human-animal relations in which local people perceive animals as non-human people who know how to move within the landscape. In this sense, this kind of relationship has many similarities with the villagers' attitude to reindeer. Animals in Kholodnoye are granted a certain level of freedom. Evgeny Tikhonovich Ganyugin, who worked in the 1960s at a reindeer farm in Kholodnoye, said: "The reindeer is an animal: that is why he is found of moving" (*Olen' est' zver', a potomu lyubit khodit'*) (Shubin 2007: 170). Northern Baikal reindeer herders often say that they just follow reindeer when they decide to change a pasture. Accordingly, Mark Dwyer and Kirill Istomin (2008: 529) wrote, that reindeer herders "move when reindeer no longer want to stay on a pasture".

Landscape and its particularities is an important part of local reindeer herders' knowledge. As the herders say, some places may attract both domestic and wild reindeer, as well as people at a particular time of the year (Anderson et al. 2014). For example, reindeer may try to escape from blackfly on the ice mounds on the shores of the rivers (Ev. *amnunda*) (Photo 7). The ice in these places disappears only at the beginning of August. Reindeer like to stay near these places during the day in summer because of a lack of biting insects: "There are no mosquitos at *amnundy*; it is windy and cold there" (Fieldnotes 2012f). During the summer time snow is also preserved up in the mountains. Local people call places in the mountains with large amounts of snow *imandany*, which derives from the Evenk word *imanda,* meaning 'snow'. These places may attract wild reindeer and Manchurian deer, which try to avoid the blackfly. Hunters especially sometimes visit these places. A hunter said that during summer wild reindeer "walk in the mountains, along the streams, they like empty and windy spaces" (Fieldnotes 2012f).

Most informants emphasised that in the summer wind plays a significant role in reindeer herders' practices. Reindeer herders from the Uluki *obchshina* keep reindeer in open and windy place at the mouth of the Nomama River. This particular campsite was chosen because it is located on at the crossing point of different winds. In a similar

Photo 7. Reindeer on the Amnunda, Nomama River, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

manner, the location of contemporary Kholodnoye was suitable for keeping reindeer in the summer because of the chilling wind that could save the herds from midges. Later on, the village even got the local name 'village on the seven winds' (*Derevnya na semi vetrakh*). Lyubov Bashkirova remembers that old people told her they usually left reindeer near the valley of the river Kholodnoye and preferred not to bring the reindeer to the neighbouring village of Dushkachan, which was a centre of local administration in the 1920s. Dushkachan is a place with a lack of wind. Lyubov Bashkirova stressed that even now some people arrive from Dushkachan and see that it might be calm there and windy in Kholodnoye at the same time. (Fieldnotes 2012b) Accordingly, people say there are fewer biting insects near Kholodnoye than in the neighbouring Staryi Uoyan village.

I concur with Charles Stépanoff (2012: 303), who says that reindeer herders' routes are the results of long-standing relationships among humans, animals, and their common environment and they are the spatial projections of "the reindeer-human co-engagement in the landscape". People from the Uluki *obshchina* are used to seasonal migrations between winter and summer pastures. The movements of the first part of the summer are dictated by the need to protect the reindeer from biting insects. In winter the reindeer herders keep reindeer in the valley of the Chaya River, then gradually move to the mouth of the Nomama River and go to the riverhead of the Kholodnaya River during the rut. The distance between winter and summer pastures is only 10–15 kilometres. This allows reindeer herders to visit the bases at the Chaya and Nomama Rivers from time to time to take supplies. People do not specially relocate the herds as "reindeer themselves migrate from place to place" (Fieldnotes 2012e). As Georgiy

Lekarev said, they never stay more than 5 days in one place during the calving period (Fieldnotes 2012a).

Before the 2010s, reindeer sometimes returned to the valley of the Chaya River in August, revisiting the same places they usually used in spring. There are many mushrooms in these places in August, which is why the herd usually moved downstream along the Chaya River in August for 10–15 days and then returned. According to Pavel Chernoyev, since 2010 reindeer had never gone there at the end of the summer (Fieldnotes 2012c). However, even though people move animals from one river valley to another, reindeer may return to the same camps themselves. In a similar way, when Nenets reindeer herders move to a new campsite; those animals that are missing will most likely return to the previous campsite (Dwyer, Istomin 2008: 529; Istomin, Dwyer 2010: 619).

During the Soviet period reindeer herders divided the herd in order to save pastures. Today reindeer herders do not specially divide their herds. Yet, when the mushrooms season starts, reindeer often move from one camp to another: "We do not do anything special. They divide into groups themselves." (Fieldnotes 2012c)

In summer reindeer herders choose a place to make camp (Ev. *bikit*) taking a number of factors into consideration. First of all, the campsite should be well positioned, because it is very important to notice the directions of reindeer movements. Reindeer herders at the mouth of the Nomama River even made 3 windows in different walls of their winter cabin (*zimovye*) in order to see and hear reindeer from inside, even though hunters usually construct cabins with only one small window. Secondly, the place should be open and windy. Local people say reindeer herders always chose windy places as campsites. Reindeer themselves constantly return to these places. When reindeer leave windy places, they sometimes return because there is no wind in other places. Therefore, reindeer herders used a combination of windy and windless places, where the wind encourages reindeer remain in certain territories, and to return to them. However, in the case of a strong wind reindeer usually leave a camp. Another important thing is the presence of water nearby. Herders usually build camps close to a river, a spring or a lake. Finally, people chose a place that is easily accessible to heavy trucks that facilitates periodic returns from the village and central base.

In camp reindeer herders use a combination of mobile and stationary constructions.In the 1990s, herders actively employed tents (*palatki*). Yet, later on at the places they used intensively from year to year, they introduced stationary structures. Thus, in 2000, reindeer herders built a small building in which to stay overnight which they called a shed (*saray*) at the place of the spring camp near the Chaya River (Photo 8). Later on the whole place received the name Saray. Pavel Chernoyev commented on this situation, saying: "We decided not to build a log cabin. If you build one every time, you will get a village in this place!" (Fieldnotes 2012c) In the 2000s, people used this place in May when the herd gradually moved from the valley of the Chaya River to the mouth of the Nomama River. Georgiy Lekarev used stakes to bind young deer at this place. People called a camp where they stay for a relatively short period an intermediate camp (*prokhodnaya stoyanka*). Reindeer herders used the flat territory near the mouth of the Nomama River as a summer camp. They usually stayed there for several months and used smoke while there. From 2006 to 2010, reindeer herders employed a stationary conical bark lodge (*yurta*). Visiting these places after 2007 I saw how people

Photo 8. Saray. Chaya River, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

Photo 9. Reindeer herders' camp. Nomama, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

Photo 10. Reindeer herders cut antlers, Nomama River, August 2009. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

constantly added new structures in the camp. In 2010 they built a log winter house near the *yurta*. In 2012 Pavel Atolaynen started to build a shed (*naves*) as rain protection for a fireplace that reindeer herders used to cook food (Photo 9). Since 2010 people have employed the *yurta* as a place to cook food, and to store products and tools. According to Georgiy Lekarev, he continued to use a tent in spring during the calving period and in autumn during the rut when reindeer move to the upper reaches of the Kholodnaya River (Fieldnotes 2012a).

DEFENCE OF A HERD FROM PREDATORS

Seasonal practices imply the use of certain locations and tools and could become a reason for the movement of people and animals. For instance, in August people usually cut the reindeer's antlers because adult bulls can traumatise each other during the rut, when they become very aggressive (Photo 10). Antlers on the ground can attract bears creating a need for constant supervision of the herd. Reindeer herders constantly observe predator movements. This becomes especially relevant when their number increases, as in 2011–2013 when reindeer herders became involved in a 'war against predators'. People tried to save reindeer from other species – bears, wolves, wolverines and kites. In summer 2013 people were especially worried about the increasing population of wolves, which were the main reason for the decrease in reindeer numbers in Kholodnoye. According to the local people, wolves even killed a chained dog

in neighbouring Kichera settlement. The herd of the Uluki *obshchina* decreased 7 times: it was 118 reindeer at the beginning of August 2012 and continued to decrease in the autumn. According to informants, reindeer herders survived similar problems in the Soviet period when wolves killed many reindeer in the valley of the Gasan River, and people had to move the herd to another place.

Herders consider poison to be the best means of exterminating wolves. However, the use of the poisoning chemical was officially prohibited in the 1990s. Even though some hunters still had these chemicals left over from the Soviet period, these were finished very quickly. People complained about the low price the state paid for the extermination of wolves: the price of a wolf's skin was 5,000 roubles in 2012, which was 4 times cheaper than in the Republic of Yakutia (Fieldnotes 2013d). People emphasised that these prices were not effective in Buryatia because of the absence of professional and skilled wolf hunters. Pavel Chernoyev said that the introduction of night vision optics can also be useful in tracking wolves (Fieldnotes 2012c).

I have observed many times how Pavel Chernyoev and Pavel Atolaynen went to supervise the herd in the forest late in the evening or early in the morning to track wolves. They said that the reindeer looked scared when they sense the presence of wolves. When reindeer started to run away the reindeer herders fired several shots from a gun in order to scare the wolves. However, not all of these night trips were effective. They helped to save the herd, yet wolves continued to attack it when the herders went back to the camp.

Reindeer herders believe that wolves compete with people and will never stop until they have killed all the reindeer in the herd. People say a wolf kills reindeer not because he is hungry: "A wolf kills reindeer and then does not eat. Then he kills more and more animals and leaves them on the ground." (Fieldnotes 2012c) Hunters and reindeer herders usually track the migration routes of wolves. They always indicate the predators not as an abstract category but as "wolves from the valley of the Chaya River", "a she-wolf who came from Vyselki" or "wolves from Irkutsk Oblast". Reindeer herder Georgiy Lekarev said that the decrease of animals in the forest could be linked to the emergence of wolves who came to the Republic of Buryatia from the North trying to escape from the intense fires: "There are many wolves in the valley of the Kholodnaya River now. One cannot see animals – wolves scared them all away. They came from somewhere. They probably tried to escape from a fire." (Fieldnotes 2012a) I heard the similar explanation in the village many times.

In the Soviet period, one of the reasons for the relocation of the reindeer farm was the increasing number of predators. For instance, due to the increasing number of wolves in the 1950s, *kolkhozniki* relocated the herds from the valley of the Tyia River to the valley of the Nyurundukan River (*Nashe olenevodstvo* 1968: 1).

In summer 2012, many reindeer were traumatised by wolves. The shortage of special remedies at the reindeer herders' base gave rise to a strategy of *bricolage* in healing. Reindeer herders actively employed everything they had at hand: lubricants, solid oil, kerosene and even diesel fuel (Photo 11). Aleksey Tulbukonov said that in 2011 there very many wounded reindeer as well. He used to heal their wounds every day by using tar oil. Georgiy Lekarev said he can see if a reindeer is ill by looking into its eyes. He said that a diseased animal usually has sad eyes "as if it wants to say something". (Fieldnotes 2012a) Informants say that previously Evenks tried to heal both rein-

deer and people using the same medicine. Local people set especially grate value on a rare medicinal plant called in the Evenk language *yanda* (Lat. *Gentiana algida*), which they translate as 'mountainous herb'. People consider this plant to be a universal medicine. I heard from Praskovya Platonova that people in the kolkhoz gave diseased calves a broth of *yanda* and that this helped (Fieldnotes 2009).

When, in summer 2012, reindeer returned to the camp wounded, they did not try to escape from people. In this case the reindeer herders tried to blame animals. I heard Pavel Atolaynen and Pavel Chernoyev speaking to the reindeer many times as they cleaned wounds with kerosene: "Well, it is painful. You should put up with it if you want to stay alive. This is your fault. Why are you wandering everywhere? Why did you walk in the bushes?" (Fieldnotes 2012c; 2012f) Thus, they tried to explain reindeer that they are themselves responsible for an incident, rather than wolves and people.

Photo 11. Pavel Atolaynen employs diesel fuel for healing a reindeer. Nomama, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

Bears are also very dangerous for the herd. In July 2012 reindeer herders saw bear's traces near to the camp and were able to reconstruct the bear's movements across the road; they pointed out the places where he had stopped and sniffed. Moreover, they said that in the bushes at the side of the road the bear tried to gnaw the skeleton of a reindeer killed by a wolf in the spring. According to reindeer herders, in 2011, they killed a bear near to a smoke fire that was close to the place where people kept old reindeer horns, cut off in autumn. In august 2009, I witnessed a similar situation when, early in the morning, reindeer herders killed a bear just 30 metres from their conical bark lodge (*yurta*). People say bears often visit the places where they can find the remains of old bones and reindeer horns. Therefore, people surround a camp with several traps (Kharinskiy, Ziker 2013: 280) which they mask with spruce branches (Photo 12). People call this type of a trap 'a loop' (*petlia*).

When a predator kills a reindeer, people do not eat its meat but use it as food for dogs and bait for bears, when making a trap. They keep this meat near the camp in a cold stream, holding it under the water with stones. In order to prepare pieces of the meat for bears the meat is kept in the stream for several weeks until it starts to spoil and has a strong smell: "A bear likes spoiled meat, he comes to the places where it smells" (Fieldnotes 2012f). Pavel Chernoyev told me that he made such bait from a wolf's meat as well (Fieldnotes 2012c).

In July 2012, bear hunting was not successful in Nomama River area. Reindeer herders said that it was a very sly bear because he managed to eat the bait twice and escaped

Photo 12. A trap covered by spruce bunches. Chaya River, July 2012. Photo by Vladimir Davydov.

from a trap by throwing it off to the side. He was wandering around for about two weeks and scared the herd many times. His presence was indicated by reindeer behaviour. When reindeer saw the bear, they returned to the smoke fire very quickly. Moreover, experienced hunters are able to realise the presence of a bear by a specific smell. The barking of a dog is also a signal of danger. Therefore, reindeer herders bind dogs in places with good visibility. Dogs can also signal the presence of predators when they smell a bear or a wolf.

Some predators may also attack people and their constructions. Many times I heard stories about bears attacked winter log houses (*zimovye*). Viktor Alekseyevich Ganyugin said that a bear had broken a stove in his *zimovye* (Fieldnotes 2012g). People perceive this type of behaviour as conscious competition with people. Wolverine are also dangerous when they wander around. In spring 2012 one killed several reindeer. Georgiy Lekarev told a short story about his struggle with a wolverine:

> In spring, when the reindeer were sleepy, this wolverine stalked, jumped and gnawed at spines. She killed several she-deer nearby. She killed a young deer as well. Then again she killed several reindeer.

Then Georgiy prepared a trap and caught the wolverine, but she managed to free her leg from the trap. Later on he decided to poison some bait. As a result he managed to exterminate both the wolverine and a bear which was wandering nearby:

> I was watching through binoculars and later saw that the bear has appeared. He came just after me, stole some bait and was poisoned as well. And they [the rein-

deer] managed to calve there [in the valley of the Chaya River] with no problems. Then wolves came to this place [the mouth of the Nomama River] and started to kill reindeer.

According to Georgiy, kites are also very dangerous for young deer. In spring 2012, reindeer herders managed to kill one. (Fieldnotes 2012a)

People assume that wild reindeer are also very dangerous for domestic ones in autumn during the rut. There were some cases when wild bulls killed domestic reindeer using their sharp horns. Another danger is that during the rut wild reindeer may take domestic she-reindeer away. In this sense, reindeer herders reflect not only the movements of domestic reindeer but of other animals as well.

CONCLUSION

Reindeer herding in the northern Baikal area is now on the edge of extinction. In 2012, local people were very sceptical about the plan of the rayon administration to increase the herd in order to produce their own tinned stewed meat. The loss of reindeer within the last several years is catastrophic and it means that local people lose emotional bounds. Pavel Chernoyev emphasised: "The loss of reindeer means for us the loss of everything" (Fieldnotes 2012c). Young people do not have the motivation to work in reindeer herding. People who work in the *obshchiny* do not receive official salaries and obtain only food and clothes. Praskovya Platonovna Lekareva said that almost the same situation existed before the Revolution of 1917, when Evenk who lost reindeer had to work with the herd of their rich relatives (Fieldnotes 2013b). Some contemporary reindeer herders, however, manage to earn some money by selling sable fur, gallbladders and other products of hunting. Yet in the case of individual hunting, the *obshchiny* may demand part of the income. People who work directly with reindeer usually do not receive the state dotation. Even though the representatives of the administration may perceive reindeer herding as a set of numbers in the documents, the local people's main concern is to save the herd. They wish they could increase the protection from predators.

In contrast to Zabaikal Krai and Yakutia, there are no trained riding and working reindeer left in Buryatia. People from the Oron *obshchina* keep their cargo saddles and sledges in a special shed and from the Uluki *obshchina*, under the roof of a house at the central base. They were not in use for about 6–7 years. All the trained reindeer have disappeared in recent years. Another thing that is different to neighbouring regions is that people do not exchange reindeer with other *obshchiny*. They do not even exchange reindeer with Oron and Uluki *obshchiny*.

Local people have recently discussed the possibility of bringing new reindeer from neighbouring regions. The heads of both *obshchiny* had an idea to purchase reindeer in the Zabaikal Krai. In summer 2013 Aleksey Ganyugin even travelled to Kust'-Kemda village in order to agree on the purchase of 10 reindeer (Fieldnotes 2013a). While working in Zabaikalye in 2014 I witnessed now he bought 18 reindeer there.

In conclusion, I am going to emphasise that regional borders never coincided with local people's practices. People and reindeer can easily move from one region to another. Therefore, animals, practices and strategies move with them. My recent field-

work in southern Yakutia and northern Zabaikalye has shown that people repeatedly cross the borders of 3 regions, have relatives in neighbouring regions and exchange reindeer with other *obshchiny* (Fieldnotes 2013d). Therefore, local human-animal relationships should be analysed within the wider socio-political context. There are many examples of people adapting the models which were imposed by the state and which they had begun to think of as traditional. The administrators saw reindeer herding as a certain and concrete strategy of human-animal patronage. However, the ethnographic examples show that this is not the only strategy of reindeer domestication in Siberia. It implies a number of particular local domestication strategies and different stories of the remoteness or closeness of animals to people that should be carefully documented.

In many cases, researchers neglected the role of the landscape, structures and movement between them in the process of reindeer domestication. However, domestication is not a process that is performed only by people. The agents of reindeer domestication process are people, structures, the landscape and animals, and they all constantly change the degree of being 'wild' or 'domestic'. Furthermore, human-reindeer relations were never relations attributed to one particular place, but to a number of places, such as summer and winter pastures, calving and hunting territories, which served as points of constant return for people and animals. Therefore, these relations should be approached as dynamic. In this sense, domestication can be seen as a process that occurs in the context of constant movement from place to place, or as domestication-on-the-move. Moreover, human-reindeer relations are embedded in a set of interspecies relations in which 'wild' and 'domestic' are relative categories. In this sense, domestication means a process, rather than a concrete quality.

Even though ethnographic literature contains a lack of reflection on how people have continually invested a lot of effort to keep reindeer close to them, and reindeer domestication was presented in the seminal works of Russian scholars as a primordial characteristic of modern herds (Vasilyevich, Levin 1951; Vainshtein 1971), the ethnographic examples from the northern Baikal reindeer herders' camps show that it is an on-going process rather than a fact from the past. Therefore, domestication can be approached as domestication-in-practice and domestication-on-the-move, which involve the periodic return of people and animals to the same places.

NOTES

1 People call this village Kholodnaya. The name Kholodnoye is used in official documents.

2 All words given here and below in italics refer to Russian vocabulary unless otherwise indicated. Evenk words are indicated as Ev.

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BELONGING TO THE LAND IN TURA: REFORMS, MIGRATIONS, AND IDENTITY POLITICS IN EVENKIA

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ABSTRACT
Tura is a mixed community where Evenks live alongside other indigenous groups and Russians. The establishment of Evenk autonomy, with the centre in Tura, in 1930 strengthened Evenk ethnic identity and unity through increased political and cultural representation, as well as through the integration of migrants from other regions. In the post-Soviet period, the community witnessed a population loss, a declining socio-economic situation, and the abolition of autonomy. In the long course of reforms and identity construction, the indigenous intelligentsia has manipulated the concept of belonging to the land either to stress or to erase cultural differences, and thus, to secure the access of the local elite to valuable resources. Currently, the most hotly debated boundaries are those dividing Evenks into local and migrant, authentic and unauthentic, urban and rural. The paper* illustrates the intricate interrelations between ethnic, indigenous, and territorial identities from an identity politics perspective.

KEYWORDS: belonging to land • Evenks • reforms • identity politics • migration

INTRODUCTION

Tura[1] is the administrative centre of Evenk Rayon (municipal district, referred to below as Evenkia) situated in Krasnoyarsk Krai, Western Siberia. Its population was formed in the course of state administrative and territorial reforms, migrations, and identity construction politics. With the establishment of Evenk autonomy in 1930, nomads were sedentarised in 'ethnic' villages (*natsional'nyi poselok*) and a labour force was drawn to Tura from district settlements (*faktoriya*) and more distant places. Labour migrants

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included Evenks from other regions, especially from neighbouring Irkutsk Oblast, as well as Russians, Tatars, Bashkirs, Ukrainians and Belorussians from across the former Soviet Union. The non-indigenous population worked in local wood processing and industrial enterprises, whereas indigenous migrants and locals were mainly employed in traditional industries and agriculture. Education and healthcare campaigns accompanied by political propaganda and targeted at indigenous peoples of the North resulted in increased political representation for the Evenk, the establishment of the ethnic intelligentsia, and strengthening of pan-Evenk ethnic identity.

Post-Soviet administrative reforms lead to the emergence of indigenous numerically small peoples of the North (KMNS)[2] as a social group, increased interest in their ethnic cultures and languages against the background of general socio-economic decline. More recent changes include the abolition of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug and further curtailing of state support to KMNS. The remaining support mainly reaches people involved in traditional industries and can hardly satisfy the needs of other indigenous populations. Yet, the available social benefits still provoke Northern indigenous essentialism, especially in former ethnic autonomies like Evenkia, and influence people's own motivations and choices in favour of indigenous identities (Beach et al. 2009). The current status of Evenks and other indigenous groups living in the district is reflected in education programmes that include 'ethnic' subjects, culture, and language revitalisation projects implemented by the local indigenous intelligentsia and leaders.

In Tura, the local Evenk intelligentsia has played an ambiguous role in propagating Evenk culture, language, and traditional education.[3] At the same time they have played an equally ambiguous role in constructing boundaries, leading to a social conflict[4] among Evenks and the fragmentation of the community. The constructed cultural differences help the ethnic elite to legitimise their priority access to material (social benefits), symbolic (cultural heritage), and political (administrative power and representation) resources. Thus, the boundaries are drawn along the lines local–migrant, central–peripheral, authentic–unauthentic, indigenous–non-indigenous or Russian, mainly involving Evenks, and, in some cases, Evenks and other ethnic groups.

The primary theoretical assumption of this paper is based on understanding of identity as a process unfolding differently in different situations. Any person has many complementary social identities, and the context decides which of them is activated at any time. Thus, identity, in a broad sense, is neither fixed nor innate, but is fashioned in the encounter between an individual and a social situation (Eriksen 1995: 259). Likewise, "ways of belonging to a group are neither given nor static; they are continuously re-shaped, re-structured, or 're-built' according to the changing situations that individuals experience, or have to cope with" (Kasten 2005: 237).

Territorial identity is based on belonging to a certain landscape, place, or geographically defined community and revealed in the paradigms of mobility–immobility, territorial belonging–de-territorialisation, and rootedness–migration. In the context of increasing mobility, globalisation and competition for resources and lands, the value of territorial identity is growing (Appadurai 1996). Similarly to territorial identity, indigenous identity rests mainly on spiritual or material connection to the land, reflected in people's worldviews. Long-term residence on the land and a special connection to it lie in the foundation of the internationally recognised concept of indigenousness.[5] It also serves as one of the four main criteria defining the status of indigenous numerically small peoples of the North.[6]

Ethnic identity is, by far, the most important type of identity, which has traditionally been the focus of anthropologists' and ethnologists' attention. According to Barth (1998 [1969]: 6, 14), "ethnicity is a matter of social organization above and beyond questions of empirical cultural differences", and "the ethnic identity is a matter of self-ascription and ascription by others". Kinship and genealogy, traditional economy and lifestyle, native languages, folklore, applied arts and crafts remain classical ethnic identity markers and meaningful categories marking belonging to the ethnic group among Evenks in Tura.

In this paper, I will look at the contemporary identity construction process from the local identity politics perspective. According to this approach, the key factor of identity construction is a competition for resources, particularly between indigenous and local population on the one hand, and non-indigenous and migrant population, on the other. The role of the main agents of such politics in Northern indigenous communities is often played by the local intelligentsia, who define the rules of belonging to the land and the local community applying their essentialist concepts of authenticity, indigeneity and tradition (Sokolovskiy 2012).

The aim of this paper is to explore multiple aspects and overlaps of territorial, indigenous and ethnic identities, with a focus on the connection of an individual or a group to land – a local community or local landscapes in a more general sense. I will analyse the intertwining identities as "cognitive maps for optional and social networks that are applied in everyday life, or mobilized in certain situations" (Kasten 2005: 237). I will show that combinations of different identity markers, including genealogy and historical memory, way of life, culture and language become relevant for Evenk territorial, indigenous and ethnic identities in different situations. However, the common underlying identity marker, and a salient feature of Evenk people's worldview is "a sense of homeland" (Sirina 2012b: 137). It is characteristic both of nomadic herders and hunters living off the land and the sedentary population attached to the local landscapes through social and economic networks of kinship and exchange.

The case of Tura community, the centre of the Evenk 'homeland' established during the Soviet period with the aim of uniting the dispersed Evenk population, should contribute to our understanding of the complex phenomenon of identity and the factors and actors that underlie the identity construction process. Apart from the state reforms, which have had a major impact on the identification process among the indigenous peoples of the North, I will focus on the ambiguous role historically played by the ethnic intelligentsia at the local level. How did Soviet administrative reforms, migrations and cultural policies, implemented among indigenous peoples of the North, affect Evenk identities in Evenkia and, especially, in Tura? What impacts have the post-Soviet socio-economic crisis, benefits for indigenous peoples, new migrations, and the recent abolition of autonomy had on Evenk identities? What are the main criteria determining belonging to land and rootedness and how are these criteria translated into territorial, indigenous, and ethnic identities in Tura? What identity markers are activated to highlight cultural differences and draw boundaries between the Evenk and other ethnic groups, and, particularly, among the Evenk themselves? How are identities manipulated in social interactions and public discourses? And, last but not least, what is the role of the indigenous intelligentsia in cultural life and identity politics in Tura?

The empirical data that form the basis of this case study were collected during my fieldwork in October 2011 in Tura, the administrative centre of the Evenk Municipal Rayon, the successor of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug abolished in 2007 as a result of its merger with Krasnoyarsk Krai. This is a rather large-scale northern settlement with a population of about five and a half thousand people, according to the 2010 census (Perepis 2010). Russians constitute a predominant ethnic group in the village, whereas indigenous peoples account for approximately a quarter of the total population. Evenk residents, who numbered 1,079 in 2002, are the majority among other indigenous populations, which include Dolgans, Kets, and Yakuts.

In addition to the current regional statistics and official records provided by the Department of Agriculture, Traditional Industries, and Indigenous Affairs in the Administration of Evenk Rayon[7] and the District Employment Bureau, my main sources of information were interviews with local residents – specialists from cultural and education institutions, representatives of local and regional authorities, ethnic leaders, writers, artists, choreographers, and teachers. The ethnic background of the majority of my informants was Evenk, with some exceptions including Russians, people of mixed (Evenk-Russian, Evenk-Latvian, Evenk-Ukranian) origin and other indigenous individuals living in Tura (Essei Yakuts and Kets). Apart from the abovementioned field materials, I relied on a substantial body of comparative data gathered during my previous long-term anthropological research among the Evenk of northern Zabaikal Krai in 1998–2006 (Povoroznyuk 2011).

The Evenk, the dominant indigenous group, who give their name to Evenkia, represent one of the most widely dispersed nomadic populations in Russia and in the world. Despite the relatively small number of their population,[8] the territory they occupy in Siberia and the Russian Far East covers over seven million square kilometres (Tugolukov 1969: 11). Such widely dispersed population structure, as well as a long history of migrations and interethnic contacts, resulted in the formation of numerous local groups of Evenks characterised by their own unique culture, dialects, clan composition, economic activities and ways of life. The great cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity of the Evenk people is reflected in the variety of ethnic names circulating among different local groups, such as Evenk, Orochon, Tungus, Hanmigan, Ile, Manegry, Murchen, etc. (Vasilyevich 1969: 3–9). Although many Evenks have at least a passive command of the Evenk language and share a common cultural heritage and subsistence economy, they tend to associate themselves with their local group or clan, which is characterised by a distinct culture and language (dialect), rather than with Evenk people in general.

The territorial identity of the Evenk people is usually associated with geographical objects, especially rivers, which mark the routes of nomadic groups (Lavrillier 2010), as well as with administrative units (districts, villages and towns) where the majority of the sedentary Evenk population is concentrated. The Soviet administrative reforms such, as the establishment of ethnic autonomies[9] accompanied by changing district and regional borders, helped to engender a greater, and unprecedented, unity among the Evenk. Yet, these reforms could not eliminate intergroup tensions predetermined by the long history of migration, competition, and conflict for lands between different clans and local groups. Today, northern communities, such as Tura, in which various

indigenous social networks overlap, often become centres for such intricate relationships, places where territorial identities are displayed and contested (Sirina 2012a: 66). Territorial identity, earlier associated with genealogies, ancestral lands and nomadic routes, and currently expressed as attachment to a motherland or belonging to the land, remains a prominent type of identity among different local groups constituting widely scattered Evenk people.

The case study of Tura presented in this paper illustrates the complex interrelations between the territorial, indigenous and ethnic identities of the Evenk people. In local identity politics, where the local intelligentsia plays a prominent role, the signs of belonging to the local community, to the category of KMNS, and the ethnic group are manipulated and verified by a number of criteria, including authenticity, indigeneity, and tradition. The competing images and concepts of the 'authentic' ethnic culture, language, traditional economy and a way of life, and even the 'right' anthropological type are propagated by different actors within the same ethnic group. Overlapping territorial, indigenous, and ethnic identities are based on the common sense of belonging to land. Yet, the discrepancy between etic and emic identities predetermined by the history of migrations and administrative reforms and manipulated by the local elite, marks differences within the same ethnic group and engenders a conflict in the community.

A CENTURY OF MIGRATIONS AND REFORMS

The History of Collectivisation and Cultural Construction

The history of Tura starts with the foundation of a culture base (*kul'tbaza*): the first buildings, including a boarding school, a veterinary station, a hospital, a tuberculosis dispensary, a *banya*, and a 'native's house' (*dom tuzemtsa*) were constructed here in 1927. The establishment of a culture base in Tura was among the first reforms in the framework of the Soviet cultural construction project implemented among indigenous peoples of the North. In 1930, The Tura culture base became the centre of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug by Decree of the Organisation of Autonomies of Indigenous Peoples of the North. Five years later, the Okrug had a population of around 6,500 people governed by 18 indigenous nomadic councils (Uvachan 1971: 166, 204).

One of the ideological goals that Soviet planners pursued when establishing the Evenk Autonomous Okrug in Krasnoyarsk Krai was creating a pan-Evenk homeland by uniting the widely dispersed Evenk population within the borders of one territory. Indeed, the Evenk population stimulated by state support and the system of distribution of specialists[10] started arriving from neighbouring Irkutsk Oblast, and later, from Buryatia, Yakutia and the Far East. In the early 20th century, Evenk emigration from the Angara River basin increased as Evenk hunting grounds and pastures were alienated in the process of expansion of Russian merchants and manufacturers' economic activities in that region (Savoskul 1970: 180–181). According to a survey conducted in 1988–1989, 64 per cent of Evenk respondents arrived in Evenkia from the Katanga Rayon in Irkutsk Oblast, and 15 per cent from the Turukhansk Rayon and Taimyr Autonomous Okrug, Krasnoyarsk Krai (Zolototrubov et al. 1992). In the early Soviet period, the Russian

population of the Evenk autonomous area grew because of immigration while the proportion of indigenous people remained the same or declined slightly. Between 1965 and 1974 the population of Tura grew from 3,500 to 5,990 people, with the Evenk population remaining 10–11 per cent through this period (Savoskul 2006: 285–286). In the 1950s and the early 1960s, the concentration of the local population in the district's main settlements[11] was connected with agricultural reforms, a merger of kolkhozes and the establishment of sovkhozes, whereas in the 1970s and 1980s, population growth had been determined by oil and gas industry development and an inflow of geologists and other qualified industrial workers. The arriving population included Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Tatars, Khakases, and other less represented ethnic groups.

Collectivisation unfolded in Evenkia faster than in other more remote regions of the Soviet North. The expropriation of private property started from reindeer, the main equivalent of power and wealth among nomadic population, and ended with hunting traps. According to some data, the proportion of collectivised households increased from 16.2 per cent in 1932 to 98.5 per cent in 1940. By 1939, the kolkhoz sector officially constituted 84 per cent of the local economy and by the early 1960s, there were 13 kolkhozes in Evenkia (Koviazin and Kuzakov 1963: 54–56). The Northern kolkhoz economy was based on reindeer herding, hunting and fishing, as well as on breeding fur animals, agriculture and raising cattle. However, significantly subsidised by the state, indigenous people's traditional industries, especially reindeer herding, were steadily growing in scale: by the 1990s there were up to 15 thousand reindeer in the district (AFM 2011: interview with S. Ch.). Older-generation Evenk informants recalled their childhood memories of the dekulakisation campaign and hard everyday labour in the kolkhozes:

> Life was hard. As soon as children turned eight, they started working in the kolkhoz. We cleared fields, made hay. In the kolkhoz, we learned both Russian and Evenk life. My uncle worked in reindeer herding and took us to the taiga in the summer. He always wore Evenk clothes and lived in the taiga. (AFM 2011: interview with S. Ch.)

Although there were no collective farms in Tura, a district timber industry enterprise (*lespromkhoz*), a fish processing plant, as well as two mining enterprises extracting graphite and feldspar were located there. While the former two organisations mainly employed people from the local population, the latter two attracted specialists from all over the country. In addition to working in organisations in Tura, the local population was always involved in subsistence hunting and fishing. People who spent their childhood in Evenkia and lived in Tura for many years feel deeply rooted in the place. Their sense of belonging to the local landscape relies on personal genealogies connected with the district and memories of the collectivisation and post-war years when their survival depended on traditional industries and living off the land.

Paternalistic Soviet cultural and education policies were aimed at the elimination of illiteracy among the nomads, nurturing an ethnic intelligentsia, and the promotion of indigenous peoples' political representation[12] in local and regional bodies. According to the system of quotas for indigenous students, the majority of school graduates were sent to study in universities in Leningrad and Khabarovsk, where they specialised in Evenk language and literature, and to pedagogical schools in Igarka, Krasnoyarsk Krai; they were also sent to Nikolayevsk-na-Amure, Khabarovsk Krai, where they were

educated as primary school teachers. Upon graduation, specialists were usually sent to work either back home or in a neighbouring region.

The interviews show that people changed their jobs and places of residence quite often. Looking for better opportunities and living conditions, they travelled across the district and, sometimes, to and from neighbouring regions, finally settling down in Tura. The proportion of Evenk employees in local state organisations was growing, regulated by the same quota system as in education and politics. The emerging Evenk intelligentsia included poets, singers, writers, teachers and scientists, who were either born in Evenkia or arrived from other regions. Remarkably, a prominent role in the formation of the 'local' intelligentsia in Evenkia was played by Evenk migrants from neighbouring Katanga Rayon, Irkutsk Oblast (Savoskul 1970: 183). The increase of the local intelligentsia led to the increased political influence of the Evenk, the popularisation of their ethnic culture, and the strengthening of Evenk identity in Tura as the centre of an ethnic autonomous area. At the same time the social, education and professional status of the Evenk population in other counties or 'peripheral' district communities was considerably lower than the rest of the population, which affected their identities:

> Here, in Ilimpiya,[13] the indigenous population is self-respecting despite its humility; they make others respect them too. In Baykit, the authorities were represented by migrants. I worked there and they treated me well. Only there I noticed that discrimination [against indigenous people] for the first time and it shocked me. The whole kolkhoz office was Russian. When we, young guys, came I could feel that attitude at once. I consider myself an Evenk because I grew up here. I always liked breaking stereotypes: I am an indigenous person, but I will show you how to work. (AFM 2011: interview with A. O.)

Post-Soviet Tura

Post-Soviet reforms and the socio-economic crisis of the 1990s drastically affected the population of Tura and Evenk Rayon. The demographic phenomenon of mass emigration of non-indigenous residents, known elsewhere in the North of Russia (Krupnik and Vakhtin 2002: 7–8), was accompanied by the concentration of the indigenous population in the district centre. As a result of these multidirectional migrations, the district population decreased from 24,769 in 1989 (Zolototrubov et al. 1992: 35), to 17,967 in 2002 (Perepis 2002), and 16,253 in 2010, while the total population of Tura was 5,990 in 1984 (Savoskul 2006: 286), 5,836 in 2002 and 5,535 in 2010 (Perepis 2010). At the same time, the indigenous population in Tura increased from 11 per cent in 1984 to almost 25 per cent in 2012.[14] Thus, the insignificant outflow of non-indigenous population from Tura was compensated by the inflow of Evenks from the district's remote villages, especially in the period when sovkhozes and infrastructure were collapsing. The majority of immigrants settled down in Tura, even if they could not find a job there.

Another wave of immigrants came to Tura from the former Soviet republics, especially from Central Asia and the Caucasus. Currently, they occupy low-skilled jobs in state organisations, or work as individual entrepreneurs, primarily, in the service sector. One more migration pattern, spreading in the Russian North, is connected with the introduction of shift work in industry, administration and the public sector. The

increasing number of low-skilled migrants from Post-Soviet countries, as well as qualified shift workers (oil and gas industry specialists and managers) from other regions, who spend some of their time in Tura, is not reflected either in the population census or in local statistics. These migrants are the most fluid and de-territorialised population cohort, often seen by 'locals' as lacking emotional attachment to the land and community and looking for immediate profit.

In the course of the federal administrative reform of the 2000s, which lead to the abolition of ethnic autonomies throughout Siberia and the North, the Evenk Autonomous Okrug was merged with Krasnoyarsk Krai and succeeded in 2007 by the Evenk Rayon. The new administrative unit formally acquired a special status, but in practice lost the main financial preferences that the previous autonomous period enjoyed. The reform further aggravated the socio-economic conditions in the district, including infrastructure and living standards, due to the lack of federal investment and the curtailing of support programmes (Komaritsin 2014). At the background of the general problems of Evenkia and the changing political agenda, indigenous issues, including political representation, ethnic education and language revitalisation projects are losing their relevance. Thus, the new political status of Evenkia affects the Evenk people, with material and administrative resources becoming scarcer.

> I witnessed the existence of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug here: although not much money was allocated, life was different, things were humming. We realised that we had our own legislation, our flag, our anthem and our emblem [...]. Now we are delegated powers in the spheres of land use and agriculture to the same extent as any other municipal district in Krasnoyarsk Krai […]. I can foresee our sad life in the future. The state will provide basic social guarantees, but there won't be that dynamic life as it used to be. The programmes are gradually stopping, outside leaders are promoted during election campaigns. (AFM 2011: interview with A. O.)

The majority of the Tura population works in the state sector – education, cultural and healthcare institutions and government bodies – where the most stable and well-paid jobs are found. Most of the men from the indigenous and local populations are still engaged in traditional industries – hunting and reindeer herding. In 2011 there were nine enterprises registered in Tura in this sector, including six indigenous *obschinas*, a municipal unitary enterprise, a limited liability company, and an agricultural production cooperative.[15] The largest municipal enterprise, Traditsionnoye Khozyaistvo Severa, headed by an Evenk leader and based in Tura with branches in other villages, is a socially oriented enterprise providing seasonal employment to local hunters. It supplies hunting equipment and weapons, buys wild deer meat and processes and sells fishing and hunting products. Evenkia's major and reindeer herding production farm, Surindinskiy, a successor to the sovkhoz of the same name, is based in the village of Surinda and has over four thousand reindeer.[16] From the economic point of view, hunting and other activities play a major role in the subsistence of the whole local population of Tura, including hunters and herders' families, as well as their more distant relatives and other ties connected to them through informal market and exchange networks.

In indigenous leaders' discourses, traditional industries are presented as an important ethnic symbol, a cultural resource and a necessary prerequisite for the preservation of ethnic cultures and languages. This essentialist interpretation of tradition (i.e. tradi-

tional economy and traditional lifestyle) underlies the legal definition of indigenous numerically small peoples of the North and explains why the lion's share of state support to these people goes to hunting and herding enterprises. However, in practice, it is not only Evenk but also other local populations that are involved in hunting and herding although they cannot claim the special status granted to KMNS. Their subsistence activities are usually described as beyond the paradigm of tradition and indigeneity, despite economic dependence on and spiritual attachment to the local landscapes of Evenkia.

Post-Soviet reforms have also had negative impacts on the indigenous education system in Evenkia. Present day ethnically and culturally oriented school education programmes include a so-called national and regional component. The Evenk language is taught as an obligatory subject in the boarding school in Tura and as an elective course in other schools in the district. Other ethnic subjects include cultural heritage, decorative and applied arts, and ethnic sport. With the demise of the quota system, the curtailment of university courses in indigenous languages, literatures, and cultures, and the closing of the pedagogical school in Igarka, indigenous school graduates no longer have reserved seats in higher or secondary education institutions. Neither do parents have financial opportunities to send their children to be educated in the regional capital of Krasnoyarsk. These changes, breaking the continuity in preparation of the local intelligentsia, decrease the education, professional, and social status of the indigenous population and affect their ethnic identity and cultural and political representation.

Current Russian ethno-cultural policies in the North include the propaganda of indigenous languages and cultures through local and district mass media, houses of culture, and education centres. Officials and the Evenk intelligentsia organise culture festivals and ethnic holidays and launch small-scale language revitalisation projects as the main measures for the preservation of cultural diversity in Evenkia. The Evenk language as an official language of the municipal district is formally used in the public sphere. One can notice signs both in Russian and Evenk on administrative buildings, yet research shows a declining level of command and informal usage of the language (Mamontova 2010). However, the ethnic culture of the local group (Ilimpiya Evenks) and the literary dialect of Evenk language are still presented as exemplary or standard for all Evenks due to the persisting image of the district as the Evenk 'homeland', where all cultural resources are concentrated, education and language policies are shaped, and ethnic identities are forged.

IDENTITY POLITICS AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

Territorial Identities: 'Locals' and 'Migrants'

Territorial identity in Tura rests on belonging to the land, which should be interpreted both as the local community and the local landscapes. Evenk informants often describe their rootedness in terms of psychological comfort and emotional attachment to the land and the nature of Tura and Evenkia.

> Even when there was no electricity in the settlement, I was not going to leave because it's my motherland. I look around and see the taiga nearby. I like it when

> you walk and see a bear on the other riverside. I like this suddenness. I like to hear cranes and geese calling in spring. I like to watch seasons come and go here. My heart fills with joy, I feel satisfied, I feel good. (AFM 2011: interview with A. O.)

Territorial identity is articulated in the classical opposition between locals (*mestnye*) and non-locals generally referred to as migrants (*priezzhie*) or temporary residents (*vremenshchiki*). In Tura, the most visible non-local others include unskilled labour migrants from the Post-Soviet republics seeking opportunities to stay in the village or the district for longer periods. The second category of non-locals includes specialists who moved from mainland Russia (*materik*) to work, often on a shift basis and with short-term contracts in order to earn money in the North and spend it back in their home regions. Labour migrants from the Post-Soviet space tend to find self-employment in the spheres of trade and services, whereas shift-workers from other regions fill well-paid positions in the oil and gas industry and administration.

The tension between the permanent and shift/temporary population is rooted in the competition for jobs and natural resources. The expanding kinship and social networks of Kazakhs and, especially, Tajiks with their distinct cultures, languages and beliefs, unfamiliar to the North, threatens the local population. The high adaptability and entrepreneurial spirit of Central Asian migrants helps them to find an economic niche in the community and expand their activities. For example, upon their arrival to Tura one Tajik family organised a shoemaker's shop where local people could have soles attached to their semi-finished fur boots (*unty*). Quite soon, they mastered the technology of making the boots themselves, entering into competition with the local Evenk women who sew and sell traditional winter clothes and boots in the community. The migrants' working ability and qualities also create competition for low-skilled jobs in the service and public sectors, at which the indigenous population also aims. Local discourses like 'Tajiks are better workers' offend Evenk job-seekers who oppose their own innate patience and modesty to Tajik perceived assertiveness and imprudence.

> I heard them say it several times in Tura: "It's better to employ a Tajik". Then I heard it on a TV programme that they are better employees than us. But here we face it in practice: they are no better. When a vacancy is open, they will prefer a Tajik because they are so active, assertive and ambitious. Perhaps it's good, we don't want to offend others, but we perceive it as some kind of impudence, disrespect […]. (AFM 2011: interview with V. K.)

The second category of migrants, mainly Russian shift or temporary workers, are often criticised for their consumerist attitudes to the North. The local population sees them as coming to the community only for the sake of making profit, devoid of any emotional or other attachment to the land. In Tura, such local opinions are especially typical in respect of specialists and managers from other regions or big cities like Moscow who work in district administration or federal level offices. According to an Evenk informant, incoming officials "never stay long in the district, and have no idea about the local culture and business" (AFM 2011: interview with T. S.). The complaints of the local community about the work of the district administration relate to federal politics, big business, and corruption, which conflict with local needs and interests and are becoming more serious as the socio-economic situation in the district becomes worse.

The indigenous identity in Tura is shared by Evenks and other groups, such as Essei Yakuts, Kets, and Dolgans who live in Evenkia. This identity rests on formal inclusion in the category of KMNS and the historical memory of peaceful co-existence of aboriginal peoples in the territory of Evenkia. Evenks express their positive attitude towards other indigenous peoples who carry out similar economic activities and lead similar ways of life and have a similar social and legal status. In 2011, Evenk informants expressed their sympathy for the Essei Yakuts who, since the abolition of autonomy, have unsuccessfully tried to regain the regional status of an ethnic entity equal to KMNS in order to become eligible for state support.[17]

> From time immemorial they [Essei Yakuts] were mentioned in decrees as an ethnic group, which has the same privileges. Now the fact that there are no Yakuts on the list of KMNS creates some tension. I absolutely don't mind that Yakuts should be included in the list. They live a really hard life, hunting like us and using the same lands. There are also Kets who receive benefits here. Many people now come from Taimyr to study – they also receive benefits. (AFM 2011: interview with V. K.)

The current Russian legislation, which tends to define indigeneity in terms of traditional economic activities, draws an invisible boundary between hunters and herders and the overwhelming majority of the indigenous population. In practice, this means that the major state support programmes are aimed at indigenous populations involved in traditional industries. The majority of the indigenous population in Tura does not meet this main criterion – their way of life is similar to the rest of the local population, with the exception of hunters leading seasonal semi-nomadic lives. Indigenous individuals who meet one of the other criteria – retirement age, low income level or employment in municipal healthcare, education and cultural institutions, receive minor support in the form of the reimbursement of travel expenses connected with health resort treatment and education, free dental care, and medical kits for new-born babies. However, enterprises or individuals who work in reindeer herding, hunting and fishing, in addition to the benefits listed above, are eligible for major support, such as equipment, snowmobiles at reduced prices, air transport for hunters to hunting grounds, free sable hunting licenses, lump-sum assistance for preparation for the hunting season, fuel, compensations for reindeer fodder.[18]

Another boundary – between indigenous people and the rest of the local population – appears in situations in which the funds, formally allocated to KMNS by targeted socio-economic support programs, are spent on local community needs in general, whereas indigenous peoples are publicly blamed for being dependents on the state:

> In a newspaper they published that 50 million [roubles] was allocated to KMNS […] while we, ordinary people, don't get anything: the community is confused. Now that unemployment has increased, this 50 million for KMNS is like a red flag to a bull. People think: "These dependents get money again". But this goes to a herding brigade, buying a snowmobile or something else, or is spent on culture – a folk group or books. My parents, who have lived all their lives in the taiga, and now my brother and sister, have never received a kopek from the state. I think

> that the information about the 50 million creates tensions. I witnessed situations in which this money was spent buying a truck, paying for a helicopter or a hotel reservation for doctors from Krasnoyarsk – all the population used their services, but, in reports, it was stated that this money was spent on KMNS. (AFM 2011: interview with V. K.)

Remarkably, indigenous individuals of ethnically mixed backgrounds usually have double identities, which play out differently in different contexts and social environments. Living in a primarily indigenous environment, a higher or a special secondary education in indigenous cultures and languages, among other factors, encourages interest in one's background and shapes indigenous identities, as with the case of a woman from a Lithuanian-Evenk family:

> My father wanted me to be registered as a Lithuanian, but my mother insisted that I register as an Evenk. She would not have cared about it, if it was not for the benefits provided to indigenous school graduates at that moment. My consciousness awoke during my studies at university – my roots revealed themselves. I liked it very much and said to my farther: "I am sorry, I am a one hundred per cent Evenk, but I promise to never change my family name". So, that was our deal. (AFM 2011: interview with I. V.)

The emic concepts of indigeneity are deeply incorporated in people's lived experiences, which extend beyond legal frameworks. Indigenous identity is then defined not only by inclusion in official lists but also by economic and spiritual connection to the local landscape, expressed in the practical skills required to lead a traditional lifestyle, as well as language, arts and crafts. A definition of an indigenous or 'aboriginal' identity given by an Evenk female informant included a minimum set of 'required' criteria: an experience of living in the taiga and seeing reindeer, a command of the native language, practical survival skills (for example, cleaning fish), arts and crafts (for example, embroidery). (AFM 2011: interview with S. Ch.)

Ethnic Identities: Cultural Differences and Authenticity

Whereas Evenks have a similar sense of belonging to a place and lead a similar lifestyle to the majority of the population in Tura, more specific identity markers become relevant in situations in which a need arises to stress their ethnic identity in interactions with other groups or to mark cultural differences among Evenks. Ethnic identity markers most frequently listed by Evenk informants include knowledge of the ethnic language and folklore (ethnic literature, songs), the practical skills necessary for living a traditional way of life in the taiga (for example, processing skins and hunting game, sewing clothes and bedding for women, and landscape orientation, hunting and herding for men), arts and crafts (making souvenirs and sewing clothes with ethnic ornaments and an ethnic colour palette), everyday cuisine and dress with ethnic features, and even an anthropological type (eye shape or 'blood factor').

Evenk ethnic identity is articulated in different ways in interrelations with Russians, on the one hand, and in encounters with migrants from Central Asia, on the other:

> I have finally learned my own psychology. With Russians I am a Russian: I know [their] sayings and proverbs, I can sing songs and recite couplets, and can dance. With Evenks, I am an Evenk: I can speak [the language], I know a lot, I can embroider. But with Tajiks I am a pure Evenk, I can't stand them, they are so self-assured! (AFM 2011: interview with L. Ch.)

The famous triad of race–culture–language (Barth 1998 [1969]: 11) that underlies Northern indigenous essentialism is currently part of local ethnic identity politics in Evenkia. Some Evenk leaders say that the combination of the 'right' anthropological type, a command of the ethnic language (particularly its literary dialect), and a 'traditional' way of life, which implies involvement in the traditional economy, is a formula of authenticity that gives one the 'right' to call oneself Evenk. Despite the fact that, in everyday life people are more critical of these criteria, such concepts still influence their experiences and worldviews.

> Who is an Evenk, at least, what do they look like? If you have big eyes, you are not an Evenk. People have stereotypes even about the appearance that an Evenk should have. Why is it so? For example, Russians and Ukrainians can also have different types of appearance: some of them are dark-haired while others are not. Why can't I be registered as an Evenk if I don't look like one? [...] But local Evenks say that an Evenk is one who has Evenk blood. Maybe they are right, because there are many mixed blood people now. But ethnicity has never been determined by appearance. (AFM 2011: interview with V. K.)

The command of the ethnic language and involvement in traditional economy are the cornerstones of every local discourse and concept of Evenk ethnicity in Tura. Paradoxically, the 'paradigm of local migrant', which is also part of territorial identity, most vividly reveals itself in interrelations between representatives of the different ethnoterritorial groups that presently constitute the Evenk community in Tura. For example, different local dialects of the Evenk language serve as cultural markers manipulated by leaders who highlight even minor language differences between 'local' (speaking literary Evenk) and 'migrant' (speaking other local dialects) Evenks. The language and cultural purism practiced by the Evenk intelligentsia in Tura is thriving despite a reduction in the number of Evenks who consider their ethnic language to be native and a decline in language competence (Mamontova 2013).

Remarkably, local concepts of the revitalisation of the Evenk language and culture are inseparably connected with the preservation of 'traditional industries' (herding, hunting and fishing), which are believed to be the only suitable environment for language revival and the main or only sphere of communication in Evenk. The following are the words of an Evenk politician who is the head of a large indigenous enterprise in Tura:

> We understand that the reindeer herder is the main native speaker. We have relieved social tensions among people living in the taiga in the conditions of the Far North. Unfortunately, the quality of reindeer herders' lives has not improved since the 18th century: iron potbelly stoves and nothing really new. Nevertheless, people lead such lives, and the Evenk language is 80 per cent connected to reindeer. We understand that this activity should be sustained in order to preserve the ethnos. (AFM 2011: interview with A. G.)

Similar discourses reiterated by political leaders and activists and incorporated into the current legislation on indigenous people have become internalised by the Evenk population at large. The 'local' ethnic intelligentsia perceives Evenks who migrated from other regions or communities in the comparatively recent past as Russified, unauthentic and assimilated, alluding to their long-term contacts and interactions with Russians, which, presumably, lead to the loss of the language and traditional way of life. From their perspective, migrants from Irkutsk Oblast, who constitute a large part of the ethnic intelligentsia in Tura, cannot be considered pure Evenk. Neither should they have the right to access the most valuable symbolic resources, 'authentic' Evenk language and culture, or the support allocated for the preservation of this cultural heritage. In fact, discrimination based on the criteria of authenticity extends to other spheres and resources such as representation in local and district bodies and indigenous organisations.

In their turn, 'migrant' Evenks consider their 'local' counterparts more aggressive, envious, 'unwilling to share their spiritual fare' with others, and feel offended by the discriminatory statements of 'local' ethnic leaders. In response to this politics of exclusion, 'migrant' Evenks emphasise their rootedness in Evenkia as their second motherland and promote, at least declaratively, the ideology of community integration based on inclusion and interethnic tolerance. In doing so, they often refer to the Soviet constructivist concept of pan-Evenk culture, language and identity forged in Evenkia. These are the words of an Evenk woman who migrated to Tura from Irkutsk Oblast over 20 years ago:

> I wonder why they perceive us like this: if we come from other regions, we don't have any rights, we are birds of passage, we hunt for luck […]. In contrast, when I came here, I was happy to discover that there is such a territory as Evenkia. All of us work here with pleasure, to the benefit of our people. We recognise them as Evenks, but here they say: "You are not Evenk", especially if you don't speak their dialect […]. Our culture is not about this kind of discrimination. For me, Essei Yakuts, Kets, as well as Russians and Tadjiks are equal people. All ethnic groups live a good life in Evenkia. (AFM 2011: interview with V. K.)

Evenks who migrated relatively recently from remote villages (*faktoriya*) constitute another group of 'migrants' in Tura. This boundary between 'local' and 'migrant' Evenks is based on an administrative centre–periphery opposition. According to popular stereotypes, *faktoriya* migrants are 'dumber', less educated and can hardly adapt to life in Tura. In contrast, 'local' Evenks are more independent, unconventional and self-confident. In some cases, Tura Evenks emphasise their local identity, referring to their higher social and education status in relation to recent migrants. At the same time, those Evenks who were born in remote villages but settled down and succeeded in Tura remember their origin and feel sympathy for those who come from the 'periphery' but still represent themselves as part of the local community.

CONCLUSION

Thus, despite traditionally strong commitment of ethnologists and anthropologists to the examination of ethnicity and ethnic identity, this is not the only or the prime aspect

of identity. Neither can it be understood and adequately interpreted as separate from other significant types of identity, such as territorial and indigenous identities based on a strong sense of belonging to land – a local community, the local or ancestral landscapes. The case of the Evenk as an ethnic group constructed in the process of the state policies of unification of widely dispersed and culturally distinct local clans, demonstrates complex interrelations and overlaps between territorial, indigenous and ethnic identities. These identities play out in especially intricate ways in Tura – the capital of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug, declared to be their 'homeland' by Soviet reformers.

The processes of Evenk identity construction have been unfolding in the context of state reforms, administrative and territorial divisions, migrations and interethnic contacts in the heart of their autonomous district. The Soviet collectivisation and cultural construction projects increased the education level and political representation of indigenous people, leading to emergence of the local intelligentsia and strengthening of Evenk ethnic identity in Tura. Post-Soviet socio-economic and political reforms, as well as indigenous rights movement of the 1990s and 2000s fostered indigenous and ethnic identities in the Russian North that fostered strategic essentialism. This stimulated the construction of ethnic community boundaries on the basis of genealogies and emphasised the connection of indigenous peoples to tradition and to the land (Sokolovskiy 2012: 81). The changing political climate, abolition of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug in 2007 and the continued withdrawal of state support from indigenous people increased competition for scarce resources and predetermined local identity battles, in which territorial identities based on belonging to land became an even more valuable resource.

In Tura, different identity types are played down or employed in one's engagement with the social environment, depending on the situation. Whereas territorial identities are activated in a locals–migrants opposition, indigenous and ethnic identities become relevant in interrelations between different social groups within the local community. Ascribed migrant identities may come into conflict with the people's own consolidating sense of belonging to land, the local community and the ethnic group. Paradoxically, boundaries based on the local–migrant, authentic–unauthentic, central–peripheral dichotomies mainly divide the Evenk ethnic community. To legitimise their special status and exclusive rights to benefits, 'local' Evenks emphasise their authenticity rooted in territorially defined cultural differences – the literary Evenk language, the 'right' anthropological type and 'authentic' culture and way of life. Even minor cultural differences are manipulated in order to declare 'non-local' Evenks 'unauthentic' and, thus, to exclude them from competition for valuable resources.

In this way, contemporary Evenk identities appear to be flexible and contextual to the extent that permits navigation between different identities. While many Evenks declare a strong affiliation to their ethnic group, which is marked by cultural, linguistic and other specific features in some cases, they generally tend to stress their indigenous and, particularly, territorial identities. The latter are displayed in a special way in the case of the Evenk people, who were historically constituted by a number of highly mobile, dispersed, and culturally diverse local groups whose identification depended on the attachment to ancestral lands rather than on belonging to one people. Today, conflicting territorial and ethnic identities with their underlying sense of belonging to land are used to draw cultural and social boundaries between Evenks in the context of local identity politics, which is aimed at restricting access to scare resources and state support.

NOTES

1 Tura had the status of urban settlement (*gorodskoye poseleniye*) until 2011. Despite the fact that the settlement had a population of over 5,535 people, according to the 2010 census its status was changed to rural.

2 KMNS refers to the Russian abbreviation of the term *korennye malochislennye narody Severa, Sibiri i Dal'nego Vostoka* (indigenous numerically small peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East). The legal status and special rights of KMNS are provided for in federal legislation, such as the Federal Law on Guarantees of the Rights of Indigenous Numerically Small Peoples of the Russian Federation (1999), the Federal Law on General Principles of the Organisation of Obschinas of KMNS (2000), the Federal Law on Territories of Traditional Land Use of KMNS (2001), to name only a few.

3 By this term I mean so-called nomadic schools, an alternative form of bicultural education aimed at indigenous children and functioning in several Northern regions in Russia. The local intelligentsia in Tura, headed by well-known Evenk linguist Zinaida Pikunova, initiated one such nomadic nursery school, attended mainly by reindeer herders' children and based in the taiga, in the vicinity of the Evenk village Surinda (AFM 2011).

4 The term conflict is used here in its wide sense as applying to "all relations between sets of individuals that involve an incompatible difference of objective […], a desire on the part of both contesetants to obtain what is available only to one, or only in part" (Dahrendorf 1959, cited by Fink 1968: 432). Such generalist interpretation of conflict relations always includes competition as an underlying motive for, or initial stage of, social conflict.

5 For example, International Labor Organisation Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and other fundamental international laws.

6 The main criteria that defines belonging to KMNS category include: residence in the traditional lands of the ancestors, a traditional lifestyle and economic activities, population size, and a distinct ethnic identity. The place of residence presuming the existence of ethnic 'homelands' served to produce a list of 'traditional territories' for each indigenous ethnic group and, thus, became an important factor in determining KMNS status (Donahoe et al. 2008: 994). Currently, the federal list of indigenous peoples of the North includes 40 indigenous ethnic groups eligible for special state support and benefits. On the wave of the international indigenous rights movement, with which Russia became actively involved in the 1990s, the population of some indigenous groups of the Russian North increased due to large-scale switching to 'indigenous' identity, stimulated by social benefits (Beach et al. 2009). The recent political changes and curtailing of state support to KMNS (Yakel 2012: 16–18) may aggravate their situation and lead to a decrease in the indigenous population due to a reverse identity shift.

7 I thank Galina Sultanova and other specialists of the Administration of Evenk Rayon for useful information on the demography, economy, culture, and education of the indigenous peoples of Evenkia.

8 According to the Census of 2010, their number constituted 37,873 people in Russia, see Perepis 2010.

9 Between 1930 and 1938, Vitimo-Olekminsk National Okrug, another Evenk autonomous area, existed in East Siberia (Zadorozhnyi et al. 1995: 15–16).

10 By to the Order of the USSR Ministry of Higher and Special Secondary Education No. 220 of 18.03.1968 On Personal Distribution of Young Specialists Graduating Higher and Special Secondary Institutions, the state obliged young graduates to work, according to their professional profile, usually in their home or neighbouring regions, and also in other parts of the country, for three years before they could choose their place of work themselves. Several employment options were usually offered, considering the specialists' health, family, and other circumstances.

11 According to the administrative division, there were three districts in the Evenk Autonomous Okrug, including Ilimpiya Rayon with its center in Tura, Baykit Rayon with its center in Baykit, and Tunguso-Chunsk Rayon with its center in Vanavara. After the 2007 administrative reform, these counties were turned into 'clusters of settlements' (*gruppa poseleniy*) and Tura remained the administrative centre of Evenkia.

12 This indirect mechanism of state control was popularly called by the term 'indigenisation of power' (*korenizatsiya vlasti*).

13 Ilimpiya Rayon, according to the former administrative division of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug.

14 AFM 2011: the data of the Department of Agriculture, Traditional Industries, and Indigenous Affairs, the Administration of Evenk Rayon.

15 Information on *obschinas* and other indigenous enterprises involved in commercial and subsistence hunting on the territory of Evenk Rayon (AFM 2011: The archive of the Department of Agriculture, Traditional Industries, and Indigenous Affairs, Administration of Evenk Rayon).

16 The dynamics of the reindeer population in Surindinsk municipal experimental production farm (AFM 2011: The archive of the Department of Agriculture, Traditional Industries, and Indigenous Affairs, Administration of Evenk Rayon).

17 On the federal level, Yakuts living in the Republic of Yakutia as an ethnic group do not qualify for inclusion in the list of KMNS due to the fact that their number exceeds 50 thousand people. However, their local ethno-territorial groups in other regions may be considered as independent unique cultures and ethnic entities. In 2013, a law was passed granting the Essei Yakuts, a large indigenous group in Evenkia, KMNS status at the level of Krasnoyarsk Krai.

18 According to Krasnoyarsk Krai law No. 7-2658 On the Social Support of Citizens Living in the Evenk Rayon, Krasnoyarsk Krai, ratified on December 18, 2008.

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF STATE INTERVENTION: FORCED RELOCATIONS AND SÁMI RIGHTS IN SWEDEN, 1919–2012

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ABSTRACT
From the late 19th century up until the post-war period, Swedish Sámi policy was dominated by an image of the Sámi as nomadic reindeer herders. As nomads, the Sámi connection to the land they used was generally considered weaker than that of the settled population, and forced relocations were part of the Sámi policy for several decades as a solution to international developments that affected reindeer husbandry. These relocations have had and still have an effect on reindeer husbandry in Sweden today. The article examines and analyses forced relocations of Sámi reindeer herders, and specifically the effects of these relocations on the situation in one Reindeer Herding District: Vapsten. Strong intra-Sámi conflicts in the District today have historical roots in the forced relocations to the area, and the article analyses these and the role of the state both in causing the conflicts as well as solving them.

KEYWORDS: reindeer husbandry • forced relocations • Sámi history • Swedish Sámi policy • governing images

INTRODUCTION

In the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, article 10 addresses the issue of relocations:

> Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation, and where possible, with the option of return. (United Nations 2007)

This article in the Declaration was deemed necessary not least due to the interest in exploiting natural resources on land occupied by indigenous peoples, and because of forced relocations that have been carried out historically for this or other reasons. In Sweden, forced relocations of the indigenous people, the Sámi or Lapps[1] as they have historically been called, was a part of indigenous policy from the late 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. This measure has caused considerable conflict, both historically and today. The aim of the article is to examine forced relocations of Sámi in Sweden, and how these relocations have affected the discussion on Sámi rights in the contemporary world, with specific focus on one Reindeer Herding District, Vapsten in the county of Västerbotten. How have the regional authorities responsible for manag-

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ing the relocations and their consequences, the County Administrative Board, the Lapp Administration, and the County Agricultural Board, handled the issue, and how have they viewed the Sámi in Vapsten and the relocated herders? How have the affected Sámi groups acted in the conflict that has developed?

DOMINANT IMAGES IN SWEDISH SÁMI POLICY

During the last decades of the 19th century, Swedish Sámi policy became more structured. It was based on a view of cultural hierarchies in which a nomadic people like the Sámi were considered inferior to Swedish agricultural and industrial society. The policy centred on a view of the Sámi as reindeer herders, endowed with a physique uniquely adapted to this industry and to this specific animal (*Riksdagstryck* 1908: 41). Images, Jan Kooiman argues, "are the main frame of reference" in a governing process, and "the way in which they are formed have an important, even decisive, influence on the unfolding of governing processes" (Kooiman 2003: 29). They form a frame of reference in the choice of instruments and strategies to reach certain goals (ibid.: 37–38). The categorisation of a group and normative statements about its character, defines the policy; only certain solutions are possible within the framework created by a specific image (Mörkenstam 1999: 42). The focus on the Sámi as reindeer herders led to a marginalisation of other aspects of Sámi culture and livelihoods, and in the end exclusion; the group was considered homogenous. Only herders with a nomadic lifestyle were considered to be 'genuine' Sámi, those who were not became invisible in the policy field. Certain objects and aspects of Sámi reindeer husbandry – for example, a nomadic lifestyle, the *lávvu* (tent hut), the *gákti* (traditional clothing) – have been used in the creation of an idealised and romanticised Swedish image of Sámi culture, an image which would have political ramifications. Instead of being internal markers of Sámi identity, these symbols became externally imposed necessary preconditions to be considered a genuine Sámi; they became producers of an ethnic identity (*Samefolket* 1980; Ruong 1981a: 15; 1981b: 20–24; Thuen 1995: 82–98).

According to this view, the so-called "Lapp shall remain Lapp" view, the Sámi should be preserved as reindeer herders, as their physical and psychological adaptation to this way of life was so great that they were unable to support themselves through other professions (*Riksdagstryck* 1913: 52). However, the livelihood and the Sámi was threatened; the expansion of agriculture limited the grazing areas and led to conflicts, and increasing contacts with Swedish culture was considered to demoralise the Sámi, undermining their nomadic character and threatening their future. If the Sámi left reindeer husbandry it would mean the end of them as a people, a development the Sámi policy was aimed at preventing. The goal of the policy was to protect the Sámi from the detrimental influences of Swedish society through segregation, thus preserving reindeer husbandry and Sámi culture. This goal harmonised with the economic interests of the state. At this time, the late 19th century, reindeer husbandry was still regarded as the only industry that could utilise large parts of the interior of northern Sweden, and was thus of national importance (Lantto 2000: 39–42). The "Lapp shall remain Lapp" view created a dualistic Swedish Sámi policy, a policy of inclusion and exclusion, of segregation and assimilation. The reindeer herders were included in the official defini-

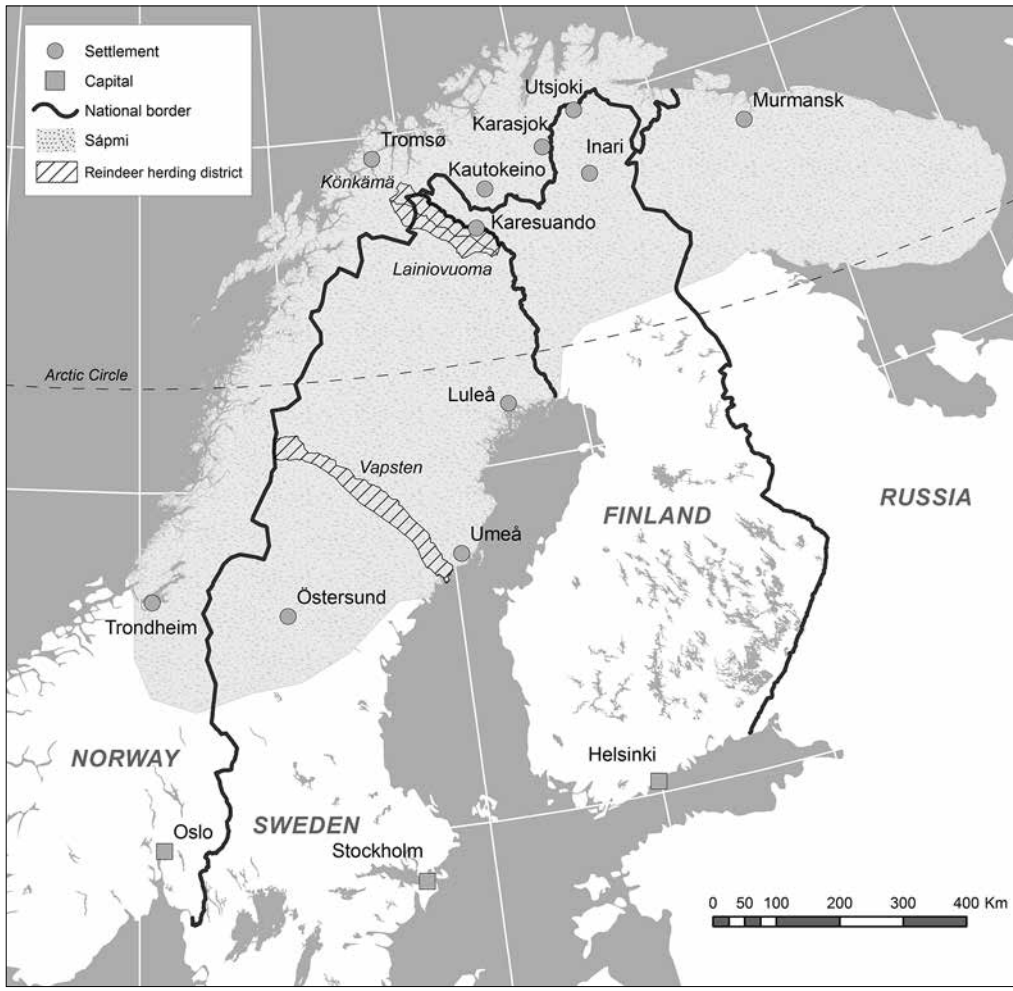

Figure 1. Map of Sápmi by Dieter Müller.

tion of the Sámi, and through segregation, they were to be protected from the threats posed by the influence of Swedish culture. Sámi who were not reindeer herders were instead excluded from the Sámi context, and were to be assimilated. The importance of the "Lapp shall remain Lapp" view in Swedish Sámi policy has only slowly diminished after World War II (Mörkenstam 1999; Lantto 2000).

The two most important tools in the work to preserve the Sámi were the Reindeer Grazing Acts (RGA) and the Lapp Administration. To protect the grazing land of the Sámi from further encroachment, and thus protect and preserve the Sámi, the first RGA was passed in 1886 (*Svensk författningssamling* 1886, nr 38). The right to use the land for reindeer grazing was collectivised, and was to be conducted in a number of Reindeer Herding Districts (RHD),[2] which were created as administrative units. The act aimed at regulating the relationship between reindeer husbandry and agriculture, but also became an instrument for control over the Sámi. A physical segregation of the Sámi was not possible, but through close supervision of their actions and of reindeer hus-

bandry, the idea was that they could safely be led past the threats that loomed around them. Two new RGAs, in 1898 and 1928, strengthened the control aspects of the legislation further (*Svensk författningssamling* 1898, nr 66; 1928, nr 309). The RGA created the framework for control, but was in itself not enough; it was also necessary that a state institution focus solely on Sámi issues in order to implement the legislation and realise the goals of the Sámi policy. The Lapp Administration became the answer to this perceived need. The Lapp Administration was an independent unit within the regional state authorities, the County Administrative Boards (CAB), in the three northernmost counties in Sweden, Norrbotten, Västerbotten and Jämtland, where reindeer husbandry was conducted and where the majority of the Sámi lived. Lapp Bailiffs led the work within the Lapp Administration, and the authority grew and found its structure and purpose over the following decades through the addition of other levels of civil servants within the authority and a strengthened position within the Sámi policy field. The structure and position of the Lapp Administration remained remarkably unchanged up until 1971, when it was closed down (Lantto 2012b).

The abolition of the Lapp Administration was part of a restructuring of the Swedish Sámi policy, which included a drive to modernise reindeer husbandry and abolish some of the more negatively burdened aspects and institutions of the old regime in the policy area. New legislation, the 1971 Reindeer Farming Act (RFA), replaced the 1928 RGA. Strengthened self-determination for the herders replaced many of the discriminatory aspects of the old act (*Svensk författningssamling* 1971, nr 437). The RHDs were also reorganised in this process,[3] and the members had to apply to have the District registered in the new organisational structure. Another regional authority, the County Agricultural Boards, assumed the responsibilities of the Lapp Administration. In 1991, the administration of reindeer husbandry was returned to the CABs as part of a restructuring of Swedish regional state administration in general. Since 2007, the Sámi Parliament, the elected representative body of the Sámi in Sweden, shares some of the administrative responsibility for reindeer husbandry issues with the CABs (*Riksdagstryck* 1988/89; *Samefolket* 2012; Svenska Samernas Riksförbund 2012a; 2012b).

The changes in the early 1970s indicated that a partially new image became dominant in Swedish Sámi policy. Reindeer husbandry, conducted in a certain way, was no longer viewed as a necessary precondition for the survival of Sámi culture; the industry was now viewed as a business as any other and no longer the main bastion for Sámi culture and traditions. Therefore the state should no longer regulate and control the herders or the RHDs: they were now given a mandate to find their own way.

FORCED RELOCATIONS AS A SOLUTION IN SWEDISH SÁMI POLICY

Forced relocations were first discussed in Swedish Sámi policy in the late 19th century, as a response to international developments. The 1751 border treaty between the then two Nordic states, Sweden-Finland and Denmark-Norway, which regulated the border between Sweden and Finland on the one hand, and Norway on the other, included a special addendum addressing the situation of the Sámi; the so-called Lapp Codicil. The Codicil stated that the traditional land use of the Sámi across the new state border was

to be respected and continue unhindered. Changes in the political situation during the early 19th century, which saw Sweden lose Finland to Russia while Norway was forced into a union with Sweden, affected the legal status of the Codicil; Russia was not one of the signatory powers of the treaty and it was thus unclear whether the Codicil was still effectual. Despite the uncertain legal situation, the regulations of the Codicil continued to be respected by all parties involved during the first half of the 19th century, although due to conflicts over land use in Finland, Russian authorities decided in 1852 to close the Norwegian-Finnish border for reindeer husbandry. The decision prompted a number of Sámi herders from Norway to become Swedish citizens; as the border between Sweden and Finland was still open, the change of citizenship enabled them to continue to use their traditional grazing lands in Norway and Finland. In 1889, however, Russia closed this loophole with the closing of the Swedish-Finnish border for reindeer husbandry. Even though many of the Sámi herders from the Norwegian side regained their Norwegian citizenship, some remained in Sweden, and the CAB in Norrbotten faced a situation in which the number of reindeer in the northern part of the county was considered too high. As a response, the CAB decided to forcibly relocate a number of herders to southern Norrbotten. The herders selected for relocation were those the CAB considered to have disregarded instructions from the regional authorities, and the action could thus be regarded as a form of punishment. Due to stubborn resistance, however, those herders affected by the decision managed to postpone moving for several years. After a very harsh winter in 1893/94, during which a large number of reindeer were lost, the CAB abandoned the plan. (Lundmark 2002: 126–130; Lehtola 2004: 36–37; Pedersen 2006; Lantto 2006: 38–50; 2008: 141–146; 2010: 545–549; Udtja Lasse 2007, 15–17, 25–40; Koch 2013: 120–122)[4]

The closing of the Swedish-Finnish border for reindeer husbandry meant that only one state border remained open for the Sámi: the Swedish-Norwegian. The traditional land use of the Sámi across this border would not, however, be allowed to continue unchanged. From the middle of the 19th century, this issue became a recurrent theme in discussions between the two states. Norwegian authorities wanted to limit the rights of herders from the Swedish side of the border to use summer pastures in Norway, and in 1883 the Swedish-Norwegian Reindeer Grazing Act, which was a first regulation of the trans-border reindeer husbandry, was enacted. When the union between the two countries was dissolved in 1905, this issue was one of the hardest to resolve. In 1919, a Swedish-Norwegian Reindeer Herding Convention was signed which regulated the trans-border reindeer husbandry in detail. The Convention meant a reduction in the grazing lands Sámi from Sweden were allowed to utilise in Norway, which above all affected the Sámi in Karesuando, the northernmost municipality of Norrbotten, who owned a significantly higher number of reindeer than they were allowed to graze in the neighbouring country according to the new Convention. To solve this problem, a programme of forced relocations of herders from Karesuando to more southerly RHDs within the county started as soon as the Convention was signed. (*Förslag till* 1918; *Svensk författningssamling* 1919, nr 895; Elbo 1952: 150–155; Åhrén 1979: 112–118; Beach 1981: 145–146; 2013: 85; Marainen 1982: 64–68; 1996: 66–67; Lantto 2000: 86–89, 131–132; 2008: 147–148; 2009: 146–147; 2010: 549–550; 2012b: 40–41, 84–85, 144–145, 230–233; Lundmark 2002: 122–126; Udtja Lasse 2007: 49–52) The timing of the relocations was favourable for the regional authorities; reindeer husbandry had endured several difficult winters dur-

ing the 1910s, which had seriously depleted the herds. This meant that there was room in many RHDs for an influx of reindeer. At the same time, however, such an influx of reindeer from other RHDs meant a limitation for the herders in the receiving Districts to increase their herds to the same levels as before the difficult winters.

In 1926, after several years of steadily increasing numbers of reindeer in Karesuando, the CAB in Norrbotten considered additional relocations of herders to be necessary, this time to Västerbotten and Jämtland as there was no more available space in the RHDs in Norrbotten. However, several of the families who had been pressured by the regional authorities to apply for relocation this time around were very reluctant to move outside Norrbotten, and they tried different stalling tactics to avoid having to leave. This time the Karesuando Sámi were not as successful in their resistance as they had been in the late 19th century, but because of their obstruction the relocations were not completed until the beginning of the 1930s. Vapsten was not one of the RHDs originally designated to receive herders from Karesuando, but when some of the Sámi who were on route to Jämtland could not move to this county, a few herders moved to the District in a temporary solution that became permanent. As in other RHDs in Västerbotten, the Sámi in Vapsten protested against accepting relocated herders, with the argument that the grazing lands already were used at full capacity, but the CAB overruled their decision. The Lapp Bailiff in Västerbotten, Gustaf Lindström, had expected resistance towards the addition of herders from Karesuando, but argued that if the situation was handled appropriately, the fear of the Sámi in his county would prove to be unfounded. (RA, SA, konseljakter 20/1 1928, nr 31; HLA, LVA, A I: 2; HLA, LVA, B I: 7; HLA, LVA, B I: 8; HLA, LVA, B I: 9; HLA, LVA, B I: 10; HLA, NLLA, A 2 c: 2; HLA, NLLA, A 2 c: 3; HLA, NLLA, D 1 b: 3; HLA, NLLA, D 1 b: 4; *Samefolkets Egen Tidning* 1926a; 1926b; 1926c; Åhrén 1979: 120–123, 134–138; Lantto 2000: 132–133; 2008: 149–150; 2009: 151–152; 2012b: 233–234)

When relocations were discussed in Norrbotten during the late 19th century, both the CAB and the Lapp Bailiff were conscious of the possibility that the relocations could cause considerable problems. The Bailiff, Frans Forsström, recognised that, contrary to popular belief of the time, the Sámi herders, despite their nomadic lifestyle, were as connected to the land they traditionally used as the settled population (HLA, LNNA, B III: 1). A Sámi herder felt the move with the reindeer to a completely unfamiliar area as deeply as any other citizen who had to leave their home and familiar surroundings. The CAB emphasised that the increased number of reindeer in the recipient area could lead to conflicts with farmers, and that there was a risk that the relocated herders' right to use the land could be disputed, as they lacked customary rights in the new area (RA, CA, konseljakter 22/3 1889, nr 36; RA, CA, konseljakter 12/12 1890, nr 24). These types of insight were absent in discussions concerning the consequences of the 1919 Convention. The lack of preparation for problems would soon become apparent, as the forced relocations in many instances resulted in serious consequences.

The reindeer herding method of the Karesuando Sámi was more extensive than the intensive herding method that had traditionally been used in South Sámi areas. This resulted in problems. Many of the Karesuando Sámi had larger reindeer herds and the freer, more extensive herding methods used by them meant that their herds absorbed the smaller herds of the Sámi in the recipient areas. Despite strong protests from those affected, the regional authorities failed to address the situation. The problems, however, would not go away and continued cause friction, both within RHDs and between

the Sámi and the regional authorities. Conflicts ran rampant in several of the Districts that had received relocated herders during the 1920s and 1930s, not least in Arjeplog, in Norrbotten, where the problems would spark a resurgence in political mobilisation among the Sámi. (Beach 1981: 132–134, 148–156; Lantto 2000: 134–207; 2012b: 232–251) Initially the situation seemed less volatile in Vapsten. The relative calm would not last, however, as the following decades would be characterised by increasing tensions.

The relocations also brought the opportunity to fulfil the goals of the Sámi policy. The North Sámi from Karesuando were close to the ideal of the Sámi as reindeer herders depicted in Swedish Sámi policy. They were viewed as the most 'genuine' Sámi because they maintained a nomadic lifestyle. In contrast, the Sámi in more southern areas were considered to have been influenced by Swedish culture to a higher degree; they were no longer living as nomads and as a result were considered to be less skilled herders. Even though not stated as an explicit objective, there were hopes that the relocated North Sámi would serve as positive examples for the South Sámi, examples that hopefully would help improve the deteriorating reindeer herding methods in the south. This was not least true for Västerbotten. Already a few years before the forced relocations, herders from Karesuando had been used by the regional authorities in an effort to improve herding methods in Västerbotten. In 1914, herders from Karesuando were brought to Västerbotten to demonstrate their herding methods and way of life, and on a return visit the following year, two herders from Västerbotten travelled to Karesuando to experience first-hand the life in a North Sámi RHD. (Lantto 2012a)

A STRICTER REGULATION OF MEMBERSHIP IN REINDEER HERDING DISTRICTS

In 1931, during the time of relocation of the Karesuando herders to Vapsten, the number of reindeer in the RHD was a little over 3,100. Four years later, this had more than doubled to almost 6,800 animals. This marked a temporary peak in the reindeer herds, as harsh winters during the middle of the 1930s would lead to large reductions. The number of reindeer fell more or less steadily until the 1950s, when the herds began to increase again. The development in Vapsten during the 1930s followed a national trend of declining reindeer herds, and many herders were forced to leave their livelihood during this period (*Statens offentliga utredningar* 1966: 52–53; Lantto 2000: 159–161, 221–222). This was also true in Västerbotten and Vapsten, but the development was aided by the actions of the Lapp Administration.

In the first half of the 1940s, the Lapp Administration initiated a number of highly publicised court cases in Norrbotten and Västerbotten. During this period, it was becoming increasingly clear that the authority had lost the struggle to prevent changes in reindeer husbandry organisation and the herders' way of life. More and more herders lived in permanent houses and thus no longer lived up to the official image of the Sámi. In an effort to clarify and refine the reindeer herding group, to differentiate it from the rest of the Sámi population, the Bailiffs in the two counties initiated what can be described as a campaign to more clearly define the criteria for membership of the RHDs. In Västerbotten, it was Sámi from the county and not relocated Karesuando Sámi who were the focus for the authorities.[5]

The first two RGAs had not contained a definition of who was considered a reindeer herder and hence had legal access to specific Sámi rights. This meant that the Swedish authorities had no formal legal tool to prevent non-reindeer herding Sámi from exercising their traditional rights. What the right to herd reindeer contained, apart from using land for grazing reindeer, was the right to hunt and fish on that land. The 1928 RGA did, however, contain a definition of who could exercise these rights:

> The right of reindeer herding [...] belongs to persons of Lappish descent, if his father or mother or anyone of their parents pursued reindeer herding as a permanent profession or assisted within this profession [...]. (*Svensk författningssamling* 1928, nr 309, § 1)

However, membership in an RHD was a necessary condition to exercise this right, and a member was a Sámi who worked actively in the industry, or who had "pursued or assisted in a permanent manner in reindeer herding, but who has ceased with it and not permanently pursued any other profession" (*Svensk författningssamling* 1928, nr 309, § 8).

The definition of the group that could exercise Sámi rights thus became firmer, and Sámi who did not comply with these criteria were to be excluded. The key phrase concerning who was to be included within the Sámi group was that reindeer herding must be pursued as a *permanent* profession. But how should this be interpreted? Could a herder have complementary employments, or should reindeer herding be pursued exclusively? And when would a herder loose these rights? Was it immediately after seeking other employment, or could a herder return to reindeer husbandry within a few years? The line separating active herders from those forced to seek employment elsewhere was thus rather diffuse. Many of the Sámi forced to leave reindeer husbandry viewed this as a temporary solution; they often continued to participate in reindeer herding activities from time to time and maintained the long-term goal of returning to their traditional livelihood as soon as their herd had grown sufficiently in size. The Lapp Administration wanted to address the ambiguities of this paragraph, in order to more clearly define who held Sámi rights; only fully active herders were to be members of the RHDs, there was no room for part-time participation in the industry. The actions of the authority would lead to courtroom battles and conflicts.

The first of the court cases, concerning illegal fishing, was brought against Axel Andersson Vinka at the District Court of Lycksele, Västerbotten in 1942. Vinka had been an active reindeer herder in Vapsten until 1923, when a decline in the number of reindeer he owned had forced him to seek other employment. Since then he had mainly performed roadwork, farming and forestry. He still owned reindeer, however, around 90 at the time of the trial, and he also participated in reindeer herding activities from time to time. He lived part-time with his wife and parents-in-law on their farm, and participated in running the farm. He had also recently purchased a homestead, but it lacked necessary buildings, and so far he had not used the land for any purpose. The prosecutor, supported by the Lapp Bailiff, argued that it was clear that Vinka could no longer be considered a member of the RHD and thus had lost his rights as a reindeer herder. He had permanently pursued other professions and therefore lost his membership in Vapsten and with it the right to hunt and fish according to the RGA. That he periodically assisted in work with reindeer did not alter this fact, and in the register of

the RHD he was categorised as a reindeer *owner* but not an active herder, and was thus excluded from the right to hunt and fish. The defence argued that Vinka only lived and worked at the farm of his parents-in-law during parts of the year, not on a permanent basis. As far as his own homestead was concerned, it was irrelevant as long as he did not erect buildings and start farming on the land. Since he did not pursue any other profession on a permanent basis, and since he still participated in reindeer herding from time to time, he should be considered an active herder, which was also how he described himself. (FRAU, SHA, rättegångshandlingar, akt A 5710)

The District Court agreed with the line of argument presented by the defence that Vinka was of Sámi descent, that he had herded reindeer as a permanent profession, and that he still owned reindeer and participated in reindeer herding from time to time. Even though he now pursued other professions, he fulfilled the demands of the RGA to be considered a Sámi and have the right to fish according to the RGA. The District Court, however, did not discuss the question of whether he permanently was pursuing another profession, and the prosecution concentrated on this in the appeal to the Court of Appeal. The prosecutor argued that it was unreasonable to view Vinka as an active herder simply because he owned a small number of reindeer and participated in reindeer herding from time to time. The fact of the matter was that Vinka permanently pursued other professions and was therefore no longer an active herder according to the RGA. In its ruling, the Court of Appeal agreed with this line of reasoning and stated that Vinka had been a reindeer herder up until 1923, but had since pursued other professions and thus permanently left reindeer herding. This had led to him losing his membership in Vapsten, and the Court of Appeal fined him for illegal fishing. (FRAU, SHA, rättegångshandlingar, akt A 5710; HÖNA, Kriminella utslag 1942, nr 113; HÖNA, Akter till kriminella utslag 1944, nr 74) Gustav Park, a leading Sámi activist at the time, regarded the ruling of the court as an infringement of Sámi rights. He argued that it was clear that the Court of Appeal did not realise the changes that were occurring in the lifestyle and organisation of the work of the herders (RA, YK 1009:2). The court's interpretation of the RGA was based on a way of life that was disappearing. The Supreme Court, however, did not see his point, and confirmed the sentence in 1944 (*Nytt Juridiskt Arkiv* 1944).

The second case, against Sivert Stångberg for illegal hunting, was brought before the District Court of Lycksele in 1943. In many ways, it resembled the case against Vinka. Stångberg had been an active reindeer herder in Vapsten until 1939, when he was forced to seek other employments due to a decline in the number of reindeer he owned. He had since worked in the forestry industry, on road work and as a postman. The arguments from the prosecution and the defence followed the lines drawn up in the Vinka case. The prosecution stressed that Stångberg's departure from reindeer herding was definite and that he no longer had the right to hunt according to the RGA. The defence argued that he still participated in reindeer herding activities every year, that his other occupations were on a temporary basis only, and that he still owned reindeer and considered himself a member of the RHD. The District Court, with the ruling of the Court of Appeal in the case against Vinka as a precedent, ruled in favour of the prosecution and Vinka was fined. (FRAU, SHA, rättegångshandlingar, akt A 6292) The case was also brought before the Court of Appeal, and Stångberg pleaded to be acquitted:

> The fact, that I only have a few reindeer and therefore from time to time have to seek employment outside reindeer husbandry to support myself, should not lead to a loss of the right to hunt and fish which belongs to the nomadic Lapp population. It cannot be reasonable to interpret the Reindeer Grazing Act in this manner, so that the poorer among the Lapp population are given a weaker position than the more wealthy. (HÖNA, Akter till kriminella utslag 1944, nr 74)

However, his arguments were to no avail; in 1944, the Court of Appeal confirmed the ruling of the District Court (HÖNA, Akter till kriminella utslag 1944, nr 74; HÖNA, Kriminella utslag 1944, nr 74).

The campaign to define the boundaries for membership in the RHDs can be regarded as a precursor to a change in how the herders were viewed, which started during the end of the 1950s, signalling a transformation in the Sámi policy. Reindeer husbandry was now viewed as any other profession, and as such, it was important that it be conducted rationally, effectively and with a sound economy as the main goal. To maintain traditional methods and lifestyles was no longer a priority; from an economised perspective on reindeer husbandry, such aspects were instead viewed as obstacles to modernisation and rationalisation. An increased standard of living for the herders was one important goal in this new view of reindeer husbandry, and since it was impossible to increase the herds greatly, this was to be achieved through a considerable decrease in the number of herders. This would lead to a strengthened economic situation for the remaining group. The Sámi policy was still focused on reindeer husbandry and on supporting it, but it was no longer based on a perspective of cultural preservation and protection. The herders were now depicted as the primary carriers of Sámi culture and so the state had a responsibility to support them and their livelihood. (Lantto 2012b: 307–320)

NEW LEGISLATION – OLD CONFLICTS

The new legislation regulating reindeer husbandry, the 1971 RFA, and the subsequent reorganisation of the RHDs, came at a time of increasing tensions in Vapsten between relocated and 'original' Sámi. As a result of the development during the previous decades, the registry of the Vapsten RHD no longer contained any Västerbotten Sámi families; only North Sámi were among the active herders. However, a process had now begun whereby several Västerbotten Sámi, whose families had been members in Vapsten, tried to gain the status of active herder. Conflicts ensued, both between the Västerbotten Sámi and the relocated herders, and between the Västerbotten Sámi and the regional authorities. These conflicts have not been resolved in the decades since the RFA was enacted, and the contemporary situation is as complicated and fraught with conflict as it was in 1971. Let us look then, at how this conflict has developed.

A first clear signal of the rising tensions was two reports to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen filed by Västerbotten Sámi in 1968, in what appears to have been a joint action. Only one of the plaintiffs had been a member of Vapsten, but both presented arguments that spoke to the general situation in the county. Jonas Barruk, who had belonged to Vapsten, claimed that he had been forced to leave reindeer husbandry due to disruptions in the industry caused by changed herding methods following the relocation of herders from Karesuando to the area. He argued that these disruptions had

led to a decrease in his number of reindeer, which had necessitated him to seek supplementary incomes. When the problems grew worse the decline in reindeer continued, and lacking alternatives Barruk was forced to make his supplementary incomes his main income, effectively leaving reindeer husbandry. However, he underlined that this had not been an active choice, but something he had been forced to do. From 1941, the regional authorities had categorised Barruk as a reindeer owner, thus depriving him of the right to hunt and fish. In the mid-1950s, Barruk was removed completely from the register in Vapsten, but in 1960 was granted continued rights to hunt and fish and live in his parents' old cottage for a period of ten years. Barruk was now on the verge of losing those rights as well. In the report to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen, he argued that it was wrong that he should loose his rights to utilise land which his family had used for generations, a situation which was applicable to many Sámi in Västerbotten. (RA, JOA, F IV: 78)

Barruk also claimed that the undemocratic leadership and control of the Lapp Administration was the reason why relocations of Karesuando Sámi to Vapsten had been facilitated in the first place. The authority had then used its "dictatorial" position to deprive the original herders in the RHD of their membership, forcing them to leave the industry. The newcomers, on the other hand, had been given preferential treatment; Barruk claimed that even though members of these families had taken up other permanent professions they remained registered as active herders. The process of categorising the Sámi as active herders or not was described as arbitrary. (Ibid.)

The CAB argued that Barruk effectively had left reindeer husbandry decades back, indicated by his change in status in the district registry in 1941, and that the rights he had been granted in 1960 was an exception due to his heritage. The situation for herders with few reindeer was an issue which was monitored by the regional authorities, but the forthcoming revision of the RGA was regarded as a solution to the problems this group faced. The CAB acknowledged that the relocations had led to some conflicts between the newcomers and the Sámi in Västerbotten concerning herding methods, but denied that these problems had been severe enough to force any from the latter group to abandon reindeer husbandry. The authority instead argued that the opposite was true; the influx of herders from Karesuando had led to a positive development which benefitted those Sámi in Västerbotten who had the "interest and ability" to adapt to new methods. The CAB also argued that the number of active herders in the county currently was at a suitable level, as all herding families had sufficient income from their work. The authority even indicated that a further influx of herders from Norrbotten could be discussed in the future, as the number of herding families in the latter county was too high in relation to the maximum number of reindeer. (Ibid.) This view reflected how the CAB described the state of reindeer husbandry in the county in general (HLA, LVA, B I: 41, 44, 51; RA, JorA, konseljakter 26/2 1971, nr 37, del 4).

That the CAB argued for the potential to recruit new herders from Norrbotten rather than Västerbotten indicated the respect shown to the reindeer herding skills of the North Sámi. It was, however, no longer a nomadic lifestyle and adherence to the old traditions that gave them this position, although their expertise in reindeer husbandry was considered superior to the Sámi in Västerbotten. The remarks made by Lapp Bailiff Hilding Johansson in 1936, when describing the situation in the county a few years after the relocations had been completed, painted a very different picture. He argued that

the "dislocations had not been a blessing for reindeer husbandry in Västerbotten"; the addition of new herders had caused considerable problems due to the clash between different herding methods, and Johansson feared that these problems would continue. (HLA, LVA, B I: 15)

A re-evaluation of the effects of the forced relocations in general, and in Vapsten in particular, would soon come, but this time by authorities other than the CAB. In 1975, the National Board of Agriculture, the central authority responsible for issues concerning reindeer husbandry, argued that historical experiences showed that the addition of herders into a RHD against the wishes of its members "has been followed by strong and more or less lasting tensions" between previous members and those relocated (quoted in *Regeringsrättens årsbok* 1975: 279). The County Agricultural Board agreed with this assessment, arguing that such tensions had occurred in Vapsten and that tensions had remained (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 2). This was in obvious contradiction to the CAB description of the matter just a few years earlier.

The second report to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen was filed by Bertil Wiinka, former member of Umbyn (today Ubmeje tjeälddie) RHD. In 1961, the Lapp Administration had changed his status in the District registry from active herder to reindeer owner, and he now demanded that this decision should be reversed. Wiinka argued that it was wrong that the Lapp Administration could make such a decision without even contacting the people who were affected by it or examining whether they wanted to remain members. If the latter was the case, they should be given reasonable opportunities to act to fulfil the demands of membership. Like Barruk, Wiinka argued that these decisions were made arbitrarily, and that the loss of rights was so great that anyone who was removed as an active herder should receive some form of compensation. He also accused the civil servants in the Lapp Administration of lacking knowledge about reindeer husbandry, something which had contributed to the problems the industry faced. The claims made by Wiinka were addressed by the Lapp Bailiff, Börje Pekkari, who simply stated that the plaintiff had pursued other professions permanently since 1959, and could thus no longer be categorised as an active herder. He no longer had any connection to reindeer husbandry, and lived far removed from the Sámi area, in the capital Stockholm. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen left both reports without action. (RA, JOA, F IV: 78, 104)

With the upcoming revision of the reindeer husbandry legislation, Pekkari stressed that it would be of even greater importance to continually and closely examine and decide who the members of the RHDs were. This was significant, as the new act would grant the RHDs themselves the power to decide on membership and other issues. If someone was denied membership, they could appeal against this at the CAB, which could reverse the decision, but only if the planned reindeer husbandry was "of considerable benefit for the District and did not cause major inconveniences for the members of the District" (RA, JOA, F IV: 104). This issue would come to be central in Vapsten. As mentioned, the new RFA demanded that the reorganised RHDs applied for registration. This process started somewhat later in Vapsten than in the other Districts in the county, but in 1973 two separate applications were filed; one made by the North Sámi herders, and one by Västerbotten Sámi. The process surrounding these actions is somewhat unclear, but it was the application from the North Sámi that was approved. A group of Västerbotten Sámi appealed against the decision, but the Administrative

Court of Appeal upheld it in 1975. (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 3; Beach 1985: 29, 32; *Samefolket* 2011a; 2011c; 2011f) This cemented a situation in which no Västerbotten Sámi remained as active herders in the District registry for Vapsten; some had moved to other RHDs, while others had left the livelihood.

The exact details of this process, however, and whether those who had left reindeer husbandry had done so voluntarily or been forced out by the new administrative authority, the County Agricultural Board, would come to be a contentious issue. One allegation is that the Board removed the remaining Västerbotten Sámi as active herders in the registry from Vapsten when the RHD applied for registration. Göran Lundvall, who served as Lapp Bailiff in the Lapp Administration and then continued his work in the new organisation from 1971, has vehemently denied this. He has repeatedly argued that the process was correct and in accordance with the RFA. The allegation, however, does not only come from the Västerbotten Sámi; one of Lundvall's former colleagues in the reindeer husbandry administration, Folke Grubbström, accused him of acting inappropriately in the process, and of furthering the interests of the North Sámi. (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 3; *Samefolket* 2011b; 2011e) It is thus a situation of word against word concerning the registration of Vapsten as an RHD under the new legislation. The result was a District registry that only contained North Sámi as active herders, and through the changes implemented in the new legislation, they controlled membership in the RHD. This issue has been very contentious over the last four decades.

The Västerbotten Sámi used a number of different strategies over the following years to be accepted as active herders in Vapsten. The most straightforward approach was to apply for membership, a strategy used several times. The County Agricultural Board addressed the first application in December 1971, when Stig-Harry Johansson presented complaints about a decision by Vapsten to deny him membership. The Board pointed out that this was an issue that the administration no longer controlled; membership was decided by the RHD, but if dissatisfied he had the option to appeal against the decision to the CAB. (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 1) Even if the statement by the Board, that it had no official decision-making powers concerning RHD membership, was correct, it still exerted influence and was very much involved in these matters. When an appeal over denied RHD membership was to be resolved by the CAB, the Board was regularly asked to give its opinion on the matter. Even though the CAB made the final decision, the stance taken by the authority responsible for administering reindeer husbandry weighed heavily.

The clarification by the Board that it did not decide in membership matters did not stop the authority expressing opinions on the issue. During the discussions concerning Johansson's application, the Board argued that the current high number of reindeer in the District made an increase inadvisable. A redistribution of reindeer ownership between the current members of Vapsten would be necessary to facilitate an increase in the number of active herders. The possibilities for establishing new family businesses were thus limited at the time, and such changes must take place through consultation and cooperation with the members of the District. (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 1) Data from 1976 indicate that the structure of reindeer ownership was different in Vapsten compared to the other RHDs in Västerbotten. The average number of reindeer owned by each family business in Vapsten was 1167, while the county average was 453, and the number of herders in Vapsten was only six, while there were between ten and twenty

in the other RHDs (*Rennäringen* 1976: 7). Four years later, the number of reindeer had decreased in Vapsten and was close to the county average, but the number of herders was still fewer than in the other RHDs (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 2). Without changes in the structure of reindeer ownership in the District, it was thus difficult to include new members.

Several new applications for membership were filed during the 1980s, after some family businesses in Vapsten were liquidated and some members moved out (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 2; HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 3). This development would seemingly create opportunities for the inclusion of new members in the RHD. According to the Board, however, the liquidations did not affect the status of the herders as active members; as long as they did not pursue any other professions they maintained their status as active herders and members of the RHD (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 2; *Regeringsrättens årsbok* 1975). The membership applications all had one thing in common: Vapsten denied them and all appeals failed. This remained unchanged until 2010, despite numerous applications for membership, when the Administrative Court, in a surprise decision, stated that Lars-Johan Johansson, the son of Stig-Harry Johansson, was a member of Vapsten (*Västerbottens-Kuriren* 2007a; 2007b; 2010a; 2010b; 2012a). Subsequent decisions in courts and by the Sámi Parliament have left the situation as uncertain as before.

During the 1970s and 1980s some Västerbotten Sámi initiated a new strategy: fencing in areas to start a form of reindeer 'farm'. The Board, however, clarified that the farming of reindeer was illegal, as those involved lacked RHD membership; the enterprise had to be discontinued and the fences dismantled, as they would pose unlawful obstacles to reindeer husbandry. As they did not comply, three Västerbotten Sámi were charged with illegal reindeer herding. The defendants argued that they should be considered members of Vapsten, but also that the right to exercise their immemorial rights should not be dependent on membership of an RHD; it was wrong that this was a necessary precondition in the RGA. Tage Östergren, one of the defendants, described this as racial discrimination by the regional authorities. Anthropologist Hugh Beach, who wrote about the case, characterised it as a serious challenge to Swedish Sámi policy as it questioned the foundation of the policy area: the focus on reindeer husbandry. The courts, however, convicted the defendants of illegal reindeer herding and did not broaden the case to include an evaluation of the legality of the Sámi policy. (Beach 1985; 1986: 14–15; *Samefolket* 1986)

Despite this, some Västerbotten Sámi still pursue small-scale reindeer husbandry today on the grazing lands of Vapsten and have revealed plans to expand (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 2, 3; Isaksson 2001: 99–101; *Samefolket* 2011c; *Västerbottens-Kuriren* 2012b; *Västerbottens Folkblad* 2012). Alternative strategies that have also been used by the Västerbotten Sámi are applications to have the entire RHD reorganised, and reporting civil servants within the Board for malfeasance (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 3, 4).

During the 1980s, the Board became more involved in the conflict. In 1981, the Board and Vapsten District came to an agreement that the RHD would make an "impartial assessment" of the possibilities of accepting new members (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 1). The following year, the Board argued that the addition of new members in Vapsten should be tried as soon as possible, but that the conflicts between the two Sámi groups were a cause for concern. To force a decision on the RHD would most likely have negative effects, but the Board expressed hopes that an active collaboration between itself, Vap-

sten and the national Sámi organisation, the Swedish Sámi Association (Svenska Samernas Riksförbund) could lead to improved relations. With the current number of reindeer and herders in Vapsten, there were no real obstacles towards adding new members, and if youth from families which previously had been active herders could be granted membership, such a measure would most likely lessen tensions. (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 2) However, with the continued pressure for change from the Västerbotten Sámi, the view of the Board became increasingly negative. In 1984, in response to renewed applications for membership in Vapsten, the authority stated that if new members were to be accepted, transferring active herders from other RHDs with high numbers of reindeer should be prioritised, as this would be in the best interest of reindeer husbandry and the herders. To allow non-reindeer herding youth from the area to become members could only be considered after a close evaluation of the situation in the entire county. The Board also argued that Vapsten was the target of malicious slander from the local population, both Sámi and Swedes. The activists among the Västerbotten Sámi were described as individuals from families that had not been active herders for several decades. According to the Board, their claims had no support in the RFA, and the authority argued that "jealousy over successful and very profitable reindeer husbandry" was an important reason to the current conflict. (HLA, LbnVA, A I g: 3)

Today, when those involved on both sides were born and raised in the area, the situation continues to be marked by conflict and difficulties in finding solutions that would allow those involved to benefit and herd reindeer. The two Sámi groups are a long way from finding common ground to stand on, as the distrust between them is seemingly too deeply embedded. The current families that are members of Vapsten argue that reindeer husbandry was in decline in the area before the relocations. The Västerbotten Sámi who were members have subsequently left the industry and thus lost their membership of the RHD. It is necessary to work actively herding reindeer to continue to be a member, which the Västerbotten Sámi did not do, and the RFA supports their position. The Västerbotten Sámi argue that the North Sámi families have more or less stolen their reindeer herding rights, and thus the right to use their traditional lands. This has been facilitated through active support from the regional authorities. The current members of Vapsten are also accused of working to prevent Västerbotten Sámi from becoming members of the RHD. (*Samefolket* 2011b; 2011c; 2011d)

The Västerbotten Sámi are today represented by their organisation Vapsten sijte,[6] which actively questions whether the current members of the RHD have any customary rights to herd reindeer in the area. This was most noticeable in connection with the so-called Nordmaling case, which was decided by the Supreme Court in 2011. The case concerned whether three of the RHDs in Västerbotten had customary rights to graze their reindeer on certain privately owned lands in Nordmaling, a municipality at the east coast of the county (*Nytt Juridiskt Arkiv* 2011). The case was ground-breaking for the Sámi in Sweden as it was the first major court case concerning land rights that they won. However, Vapsten sijte tried to have Vapsten RHD removed from the decision, arguing that the customary rights to herd reindeer in Nordmaling belonged to the members of the organization and not the members of the RHD, as their families came too late to the area to have any such rights (*Samefolket* 2011c; *Västerbottens Folkblad* 2011; *Dagens Nyheter* 2011). The Supreme Court did not acknowledge the claims by Vapsten sijte, but the action of the organisation illustrates the depths of the conflict.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the end of the 19th century, the dominant governing image in Swedish Sámi policy was of the Sámi as nomadic reindeer herders. As nomads, they were viewed as less developed than the rest of the population working in agriculture and industry, and unable to realise what was best for them. It was therefore generally viewed as a responsibility of the state to protect and guide the Sámi, helping them reach their potential as reindeer herders while limiting negative external influences. Lacking a permanent home, the nomadic lifestyle of the Sámi also contributed to a view that they had a weaker connection to the land they used than the settled population. Relocation of the Sámi was thus regarded as less invasive and problematic.

When Swedish authorities, following the signing of the 1919 Reindeer Herding Convention with Norway, enacted forced relocations of Sámi reindeer herders from Karesuando, this was justified by the governing image in the Sámi policy. However, this action would come to have some very unexpected deeply felt and long-term effects. One obvious effect for the relocated herders was that they had to leave their traditional lands and adjust to a completely new and unfamiliar environment. The consequences of the relocations did not stop there, however; the Sámi in the RHDs that received relocated herders were also affected, through changed herding methods and increased internal competition within the Districts. One further effect was that the influx of new reindeer limited the opportunities for the original members to increase their herds, which had been depleted during the 1910s. Grazing land was limited and could support only a certain number of reindeer; subsequent industrial exploitation of the land has since further limited the possibilities to expand herds.

A second wave of relocations started during the second half of the 1920s, this time to Västerbotten and Jämtland. Vapsten was not targeted to receive any relocated herders, but due to unforeseen circumstances, the District became the unintended destination for a few. This unexpected turn of events, combined with the following development in which more and more of the original members of the RHD left the reindeer husbandry or moved to other RHDs, led to the unique situation in which today all active herders in the District are descendants of relocated herders, something that has been the case now for four decades. These circumstances have created a volatile situation, with strong conflicts between the descendants of the two groups, the original reindeer herding families and the relocated Sámi.

When the new RFA was introduced in 1971, at the same time as the Lapp Administration was disbanded, one of the arguments often used was that the previous legislation and state administration had been too controlling and repressive. The reform indicated a changed governing image within Sámi policy, where reindeer husbandry was viewed as a business like any other. The RHDs were granted a greater degree of independence and self-determination, and the state should no longer play an active role in internal issues in the District. One of the areas where the herders could now make independent decisions was membership in the District. While this was a positive development, it created conflicts in the case of Vapsten when Västerbotten Sámi were denied membership. The state authorities were unwilling to get involved directly in the conflict, as membership was now an internal issue within the RHD. This position,

however, did not address the fact that the problems stemmed from the previous repressive and controlling system, creating a collision between the two governing images dominating Sámi policy during the 20th century. The non-interference position is difficult to combine and motivate when the previously interventionist agenda has created the problems. The passivity of the authorities has further contributed to a worsening of the conflict.

State decisions and actions laid the foundation for the current conflict, which has left the two Sámi groups unable to find common ground for discussions to try to resolve the issue. Accusations are much closer at hand than compromise, in a situation where both sides consider themselves right, which creates additional bitterness and moves the parties even further from each other. Tage Östergren has argued that the situation, in which Sámi groups are pitted against each other, only benefits external interests while weakening the Sámi (*Samefolket* 1986: 25). While the analysis is correct, both sides in this Sámi conflict have been unable or perhaps unwilling to seek compromise and find common ground. This unwillingness to seek any solution other than complete victory makes the conflict hard to resolve. The deadlocked positions indicate an even greater necessity for the state to address the actual problem and its causes, and not simply try to handle the conflict. That the regional authorities since 1971 has used the RFA as a form of shield to deflect responsibility for the situation is well within the letter of the law, but does not take the historical development into account. The current conflict is the result of historical state intervention in reindeer husbandry, and a solution can only come if the state actively engages in the situation and try to find a way forward through mediation.

The responsibility of the state for the situation is thus clear, as is the need to address the issue actively. The two Sámi sides, however, also have a responsibility for the continued problems. The refusal of Vapsten to accept Västerbotten Sámi as members in the district, with the argument that active participation in reindeer husbandry is necessary for membership without allowing any path for individuals who are not members to participate within the RHD, locks the relations between the two groups in history; a history in which Västerbotten Sámi left as members of Vapsten district in what the North Sámi interpreted as disinterest in the industry. As the contemporary situation is clearly very different, this strategy is unproductive and serves to heighten conflict. The strategy of the Västerbotten Sámi in Vapsten sijte, on the other hand, to question whether Vapsten RHD has any customary rights to the grazing lands seems hazardous. In Swedish legislation, the indigenous rights of the Sámi have been viewed as a collective right since the first RGA in 1886. Individual indigenous rights are not acknowledged, and if successful in undermining the customary rights of the RHD, the Vapsten sijte group would then face a long and uphill battle to have their rights recognised instead. They run the risk of contributing to undermining Sámi rights in general. The situation is thus seemingly deadlocked, without a clear solution. To avoid a further escalation of the conflict, and in order to shoulder its responsibility, the state must become more active in handling the situation. Not through making a decision for the Sámi parties, but rather through the appointment of an external actor with a mandate to address the issue.

NOTES

1 Up until the 1960s, the Sámi in Sweden were officially referred to as Lapps, a term that was first used in Russia. The Sámi perceived Lapp as derogatory, and their critique of the use of the term contributed to a change to the endonym Sámi. The term Sámi will be used consistently throughout the article, except for some quotations and expressions in which the old term Lapp occurs. For some background on the naming of the Sámi, see for example Hansen, Olsen 2004: 45–51.

2 The Swedish term for these districts was *lappby* (Lapp Village).

3 In this process, the name of the RHD was changed from *lappby* to *sameby* (from Lapp Village to Sámi Village).

4 A few years later, some Sámi in Karesuando voluntarily moved with their reindeer herds to other RHDs in Norrbotten (Beach 1981: 122; Lantto 2012b: 124–125).

5 Only the two court cases in Västerbotten will be discussed here, for an analysis of the court case in Norrbotten, see Lantto 2000: 251–252.

6 The organisation, founded in 2010, is described as a recreation of the original Vapsten RHD, which was the group behind the application for registration of the RHD filed by Västerbotten Sámi as a response to the RFA (*Västerbottens-Kuriren* 2010c).

ABBREVIATIONS

CAB – County Administrative Board
RFA – Reindeer Farming Act
RGA – Reindeer Grazing Act
RHD – Reindeer Herding District

UNPRINTED SOURCES

FRAU – Folkrörelsearkivet i Umeå
    SHA – Sven Hallströms arkivsamling
        Rättegångshandlingar
HÖNA – Hovrätten för Övre Norrland arkiv
    Akter till Krim. utslag
        Krim. utslag
RA – Riksarkivet
    CA – Civildepartementets arkiv
        Konseljakter
    JorA – Jordbruksdepartementets arkiv
        Konseljakter
    JOA – Justitieombudsmannens arkiv
        F IV – Akter i avgjorda mål
    SA – Socialdepartementets arkiv
        Konseljakter
    YK – Yngre Kommittéarkivet
        1009 – 1939 års lapputredning
HLA – Landsarkivet i Härnösand
    LbnVA – Lantbruknämndens i Västerbottens län arkiv

A I g – Protokoll förda i rennäringsdelegationen
LNNA – Lappfogdens i Norrbottens norra distrikt arkiv
B III – Årsberättelser.
LVA – Lappfogdens i Västerbottens län arkiv
A I – Protokoll
B I – Brevkoncept
NLLA – Norrbottens läns landskanslis arkiv
A 2 c – Brevkoncept i lappärenden.
D 1 b – Ankomna brev i lappärenden.

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SAKHA MUSIC: SELLING 'EXOTIC' EUROPEANNESS IN ASIA AND ASIANNESS IN EUROPE

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ABSTRACT
In this paper* I compare strategies to sell Sakha music in different countries over a ten-year period with a particular emphasis on 2005–2007. Due the fact that local income from performing and selling albums is not sufficient for living the artists from the Republic of Sakha are trying to perform as much abroad as possible. When touring abroad, the music and performances have changed over time depending on the region. Sakha artists attempt to respond to the expectations of the audience and modify their program accordingly. In a period from the late 1990s to 2007, the same artists have switched from pop to rock to folk music, using different languages and different costumes, performing as Asian or European artists. Comparing these strategies, one can see how Sakha musicians use cultural stereotypes of foreign audiences for economic purposes.

KEYWORDS: Sakha • music • youth • hybridity • postcolonialism • post-socialism

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, notions of Europeanness and Asianness among Sakha musicians are closely scrutinised. The focus of my paper is on various forms of Sakha music and how these different genres match the concepts of Europeanness or Asianness. I wish to demonstrate how these categories are manipulated, with varying degrees of success, among the audiences of a different nature and from different regions. In these processes, the geographical distance between the origin of the artist and the audience plays a primary

* This paper is based on presentations from the Soyuz conference in Princeton, in April 2007, Russian Field in St. Petersburg and World Routes in Tartu, both in May 2012. The topic of the conferences inspired me to look at the music of Sakha from the perspective of Eurasianism and movement. I also would like to thank the Estonian Literary Museum for supporting my fieldwork in Siberia and last but not least Chris Hann and the Max Planck-Institute for Social Anthropology for giving me a chance to get to know the Republic of Sakha. This research was also supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory, CECT). Moreover, I wish to thank two anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments that helped to shape this paper.

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role in confirming the authenticity of the music. To offer an audience music by labelling it as exotic is a strategy employed by Sakha artists to market their music and increase their income and prestige.

The notion of the exotic in music was theorised by John Hutnyk (2000), who sees it as a result of the continuing postcolonial cultural relationship between Western countries and their former colonies. In recent years academic discussion whether postcolonial and post-Socialist contexts are comparable is gaining more attention. Several scholars have argued that within the Soviet Union and the Socialist block there were colonial ties between the dominant Russian or Soviet, and other ethnic groups or satellite states (Moore 2001; Chari, Verdery 2009). There are indications that in several parts of the former Soviet Union non-Russian people developed typical postcolonial thinking, presenting themselves as victims of the dominant Russian politics depriving them from authentic means of expression, history and culture (Gerasimov et al. 2013: 125–126; Oushakine 2013). Another side of the postcolonial relationship is the current exoticising of Arctic minorities in Russia in particular and the former Soviet Union in general. As will be shown below, marketing the exotic is a diverse and ambivalent phenomenon, and where Sakha artists present themselves and are perceived by foreign audience as exotic. The ambivalence contains an integrating of local cultures in their performance, as well as evidence of their exposure to the modern world. Subsequently, it will be shown that location and remoteness plays and important role in constructing and selling 'exotic' music.

The data for this research was collected using different resources. In 2000 and 2001 I spent 14 months in the largest Russian region – the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in Eastern Siberia. I went there as a doctoral student of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle (Saale) to conduct research on changing property relations in a post-Socialist transition society. But as often happens during a long period of fieldwork, one has plenty of free time to learn about other spheres of the local life. Since I have always been interested in music, I was eager to see and get a taste of the local music culture. Within a short time I met several local DJs, artists, and promoters and visited many local clubs and other music events. I always took notes and upon my return I had accumulated a solid amount of field notes about Sakha music culture. Since 2001 I have conducted a series of field studies in Sakha with the intention learning more about the republic's popular music culture. Over the years, I conducted fieldwork sessions for shorter periods in Eastern Siberia, studying changes in the local music scene. Not only interviews and discussions with Sakha artists and managers were a source of this paper: since 2007 I have studied the global world music business. I have observed Sakha artists building their international careers and conducted interviews with their Western managers. Another source for the data was the media of the Republic of Sakha, which loves to cover the 'success stories' of the artists, and I have a substantial number of newspaper articles and local TV clips. This paper documents a short period (2005–2007) in the development of marketing strategies in Sakha music, the only period where producers and artists looked for opportunities in the West and in the East simultaneously.

THE REPUBLIC OF SAKHA AND THE COLONIAL ENCOUNTER

The Republic of Sakha is the largest subject of the Russian Federation covering more than three million square kilometres. It is located in the eastern part of the country, belonging regionally to the Far East. Formerly the Yakut Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic, contemporary Sakha declared its sovereignty in 1991 and changed its name to the Republic of Sakha. The population of the Republic is quite small, less than one million. Approximately 45 per cent of the population are Russian (descendants of immigrants, and immigrants from the European part of Russia). The titular ethnic group, the Sakha speaking one of the Turkic languages, constitutes about 50 per cent of the population. The rest are indigenous minorities, the so-called Small Peoples of the North, including such groups as Evenk, Even, Yukagir and Dolgan. Population density is low, and most people are scattered over the vast territory (Pakhomov 1999: 2; Tichotsky 2000: 8). Therefore the capital Yakutsk and industrial towns like Mirnyi and Neringri, where the population density is high, are important centres of the local social and cultural life. The national government resides in Yakutsk, also the main theatres, the national TV and radio, and the most popular clubs are situated there.

In Russia, the Republic of Sakha is known as the region that produces 99 per cent of Russian diamonds (Tichotsky 2000). The wealth from this economic activity, however, is distributed unevenly. In 2005 southern and western Russian-dominated industrial towns were wealthier: people earned higher wages and had more social guarantees. The Sakha people and indigenous minorities, who live mainly in rural areas, in smaller non-industrial towns or in the capital Yakutsk, had smaller incomes on average, with the exception of the so called new Sakha (*sanga sakha* in Sakha or *novye yakuty* in Russian). Ethnic relations in the republic have been and are complex.

After the declaration of sovereignty, ethnic relations between indigenous and incomer communities became tense. This informal ethnic enmity has decreased since 2004–2005 owing to improvement in the general standard of living. Similar differentiation could be noted in the cultural space where in the early 2000s we can speak about two separate communities, both centred on media, music and clubs in their own language (Ventsel 2004a; 2004b). In recent years, ethnic differentiation in music and the media has diminished (Ventsel 2006; 2012; Habeck, Ventsel 2009).

The development of the modern Sakha culture should be seen within the framework of the colonial encounter. The first contacts between the peoples settled in the territory of the Republic of Sakha and Russians took place in the 17th century and it is widely believed that since 1632 the Sakha region has belonged to Russia. However, the subordination of the Sakha people to Russians is a debatable issue. It is a known fact that the Sakha nobility maintained their leading position throughout the Tsarist period. With the Communists' ascension to power, the Sakha people very quickly infiltrated the new power structures (Forsyth 1992: 259). In fact, during my fieldwork trips to different regions of the Republic of Sakha that are populated by Evenk and Even, the older people told me that it was not the Russians who forced them into a sedentary life and collective economy, but the young Sakha Communists. In their region, the Sakha also maintained a leading position in political and cultural institutions during the Soviet period. This was also noticed by the Canadian writer Farley Mowat, who visited this region twice in the 1960s (Mowat 1970).

To maintain their prominent position in regional politics, the Sakha went through a process of cultural adaption and modification. Sakha people already became literate in the 1920s with the establishing of several cultural organisations. In the 1960s they established Sakha schools, music academies and university faculties; newspapers were published in the Sakha language. Over a short period, Sakha culture developed into a high culture with the establishing of theatres and operas. Here, the Sakha culture greatly profited from the Soviet policy that prescribed the establishment of native culture among all the ethnic groups in the country (Forsyth 1992). The Soviet concept of national culture meant that each ethnic group had a fixed territory and distinct culture fostered within this territory, and it was according to this concept that the Sakha people received an autonomous republic. The Sakha people had existing resources – human and financial – with which to establish their own education, literature and arts, which was not typical among other Soviet minorities. In this sense, the Sakha people never appeared to the Russians as a marginal local minority with a 'backward' or 'primitive' culture, as was the case with many other Siberian minorities (Kotkin, Wolff 1995: 107). Their strong position in the affairs of their own (autonomous) republic created a strong sense of identity and ethnic pride, which the Sakha people still have today.

With the declaration of sovereignty of the Republic of Sakha, Sakha ethnic consciousness increased tremendously. Culturally it meant that the position of the Sakha language strengthened. A local native-language cultural college and many other education institutions were established. For a short time, even a discussion on whether to make all tertiary education institutions use the Sakha language was held (Ferguson 2013: 123–124). Ultimately this did not happen, and even though the Sakha language was and still is in many fields subordinated to Russian, the Sakha people have never felt that their culture is under threat or doomed to extinction, which is, of course, another unusual phenomenon in Siberia.

Owing to their greater number and institutional support, the Sakha people managed to establish a modern culture, especially in the sphere of art, theatre, poetry and music, and incorporate it into their everyday culture. Sakha music in its various forms is not something made and enjoyed by a small educated elite but is recognised by people as part of Sakha *natsional'naya kul'tura* (national culture). The Soviet period did not destroy this culture, but affected its institutional structure and ideology. In the Soviet period Sakha culture, music included, was governed and controlled by the Ministry of Culture and by various cultural and academic institutions. Music was under the influence and control of the Theatre of *Estrada* (mainly fostering entertainment music) and academic institutions such as museums, centres of culture, and also folk music scholars at the university. Ideologically, for the majority of the Sakha people, their *natsional'naya kul'tura* has, symbolically speaking, turned into a holy cow that embodies the essence of their people and their identity. Here the influence of Soviet national policy, which reduced minorities to exotic ethnographic groups, is obvious. After the October Revolution, some politicians from non-Russian ethnicities argued that non-Russian minorities should be seen as victims of Tsarist colonisation, as "proletarian classless minorities" (Glebov et al. 2013: 112–113). Therefore they should be objects of a parallel policy: their cultures should be simultaneously maintained and modernised, a process that produced the "emergence of 'hybrid' identities" (Marsden 2012: 343). Similar to colonial subjects in Asia or Africa, indigenous people in the Arctic were supposed to possess a "timeless

Tradition" (Kandiyoti, Cole 2002 in Marsden 2012: 343), a never-changing indigenous culture. On the other hand, modernisation meant a wide range of policies that aimed of bringing 'Soviet enlightenment' to these people. In practice, it meant grafting European culture onto the culture of the indigenous people (Habeck 2011: 65–66). The notion of the enlightenment was broad, including: hygiene, literacy, modern forms of culture, sedentarisation, etc.

Another aspect of Sakha identity is their language, and therefore everything created in the Sakha language automatically belongs to Sakha culture (Drobizheva 1998). Modern forms of music – *sovremennaya muzyka* – are also observed by state and cultural institutions as part of Sakha culture and are often supported as such.

I will conclude this section of my paper by arguing that the Sakha cultural identity is very ambivalent. The Sakha see themselves as representatives of an ancient, glorious and unique Arctic culture. On the other hand, the Sakha are very proud that their culture is modern. Being physically Asians and living geographically in Asia, their connection with Russian culture is very close. The basic concepts of high culture – the quality of opera, theatre, art – are strongly influenced by Russians because many Sakha artists have studied in Moscow or Leningrad and have maintained strong contacts with Russian colleagues. In the early 1990s, the Sakha cleverly used existing legislation on cultural development for non-Russian minorities and invested huge republican and federal funds in Sakha language education and culture (cf. Donskoi 2001; Donskoi et al. 2001; Argunova 2003; Baisheva et al. 2012). The Sakha also have a very strong state identity, identifying themselves with the Russian state. Moreover, they know that their everyday culture is very European and differs from a 'typical' Asian culture (Korean, Chinese, Japanese). The economic expansion of China and Korea, which started at the end of the 1990s, created a strong dislike of Asian nations, who are viewed as peoples who have come to Sakha to exploit the locals. Therefore, the Sakha people *en masse* have a very fluid identity when it comes to define whether they are European or Asian. The advocates of the European or Asian Sakha identity discuss the issue constantly in their books and newspaper articles (see Afanasyev 1994; Nikolayev 1994; Vinokurova 1994; Kondakov 1998; Tyrylgin 2000; Alekseyev 2003; Vorobyeva, Spiridonov 2003; Bravina 2005; Ignatyeva 2010; Alekseyev et al. 2012).

The so-called urban studies linking music, consumption habits and identity have gained attention since the publication of the works of the Birmingham based Centre for Cross-Cultural Studies (see Hall, Jefferson 1986). Many theoretical works in urban studies have focused on music – linking it with resistance, consumption, ethnicity and identity (see, for example, Burke 1978; Cawelti 1990; Chye, Konk 1996; Dörfel 1996; Frith 1996; Fuller 1998; Connell, Gibson 2003). Over time, a substantial amount of data has been accumulated on youth in urban environments and their lifestyle as it relates to music, identity, consumption, and politics based on studies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and America (cf. Toop 1992; Bryson 1996; Chye, Konk 1996; Friedman, Weiner 1999; Akindes 2002; Brusila 2002).

Within the field of cultural studies, literature on socially marginalised minority music (such as bhangra, hiphop, reggae, qwali) and its content is very rich. The history and development of this music is often discussed from the perspective of (post)colonialism. In my paper I wish to lean on the concept of the exotic proposed by John Hutnyk (2000). Hutnyk discusses the British-Asian music bhangra and shows how the category

of Otherness is applied by the music industry, and how the media recognises such music, which is 'exotic' as long as it does not criticise the racial face of British society. He also addresses the hidden side of the British-Asian music scene and shows how politically aware musicians resist such a policy. In the following I will show how exoticism as a marketing strategy supports Sakha artists, encouraging them to use the notion of Otherness to help develop a career.

THE HISTORY OF SAKHA POPULAR MUSIC

Music has always played a large part in the cultural life of Sakha and non-Sakha people in the Sakha Republic. Not only is the main Sakha national epos, *Olonkho*, performed through singing, but also music as a leisure activity, entertainment and accompaniment to rituals has always been present in the region (Vinokurova 1994; Safronov, Safronov 2000; Crate 2002). In the Soviet Union, the state took great interest and provided support for the maintenance and development of the culture of 'backward' groups that also included the indigenous peoples in Siberia. This policy was applied by establishing village and town clubs – the so-called culture houses – and organising folklore groups, national sports teams, the arts and handicrafts. Not only the Sakha but all minority groups established such groups in their villages, and often more than one group focused on singing and dancing the folk songs and dances in their own language. Parallel to this, music from European Russia always reached Eastern Siberia and melodies from classical music to pop were broadcast on radio and TV. Apart from Sakha musicians there were also several Russian music groups active in Sakha territory, mainly subordinated to culture officials from various state institutions like theatres, culture houses and even the departments of culture in factories. During the Soviet period, the Sakha established and developed their own popular music culture mainly from the example of the Russians. Since then the Sakha have had their own light music scene (*estrada*), which was similar to the entertainment music of the period. The artists of this period – Arkadiy Alekseyev, Petr Toborukov, and Marina Popova – are still remembered and loved today. In addition, there was always music in the Russian language, produced by the local rapidly increasing Russian population. All these artists – both Russians and Sakha – recorded their songs at local radio stations; there were very few Sakha records released during the Soviet time. Thus – according to my informants, who were involved in the music making in the 1960s and 1970s – local pop music was listened to mainly at live concerts or via the local radio station and only a small part of the music circulated among people on home-made tapes and cassettes.

The situation changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Bars, clubs and discos mushroomed out of nowhere and within a decade had been permanently established in people's lives. Music became more important and visible, and not just because of the new social spaces for enjoying music. With the development of the private economy, private radio stations were established. Most of these played only Russian and Western music, but in 1996 Victoria Sakhalyy's radio station was established, playing mainly Sakha music and with a program presented entirely in Sakha. Another radio station that airs Sakha music, especially older music, is the local state-owned radio station NVK. In 2006, another private Sakha music radio station (Radio Tsentr Sakhalyy) was

established in Yakutsk, followed by state owned Radio Duoraan. With the appearance of places to listen to music and numerous radio channels to broadcast it, more musicians appeared. In fact, for young artists and musicians in rural areas, music became an incentive to leave their villages and set foot in Yakutsk, as I have discussed in a previous article (Ventsel 2004b). The music also became an important channel for the spread of information and promotion of local fashion via the artists' appearance on TV, in public events and music videos (Ventsel 2006).

Over time, various music styles developed, targeting different groups among the local population. The aforementioned *estrada* is a music style based on the melodies of sixties and seventies dance music and is often performed by mature singers primarily for an 'older' audience. Rock is another musical genre practiced in Sakha. The first Sakha rock group Cholbon was established in the 1970s. They have maintained their leading position, while the number of Sakha rock groups has multiplied since the eighties. Two major tendencies can be differentiated in local rock music: Chris Rea-like dance rock music, which is popular among all age groups, and the so-called shamanic rock, represented by a harder rock in the style of Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin with elements of Sakha traditional music (folk melodies, the use of mouth harps and other traditional instruments), the performers of which wear stylised Sakha folk costumes onstage (Cholbon, Aital). The shamanic rock is more appreciated by students and Sakha intellectuals and is also known in Russian metropolises like Moscow and St. Petersburg and to a certain extent even in world music circles abroad.

The more 'youthful' part of Sakha music is referred to as *popsa*, which simply means 'pop music' in Russian. *Popsa* is average disco-pop, influenced by similar Russian and Western music. The salience of this inexpensive computer-produced music has increased since MTV launched its Russian programme, on which more than half of the aired music is Russian. Active in the *popsa*-style are both male (Igor) and female (Varya Amanatova) solo artists, and boy (X-Up) and girl groups (Maxima). *Popsa* artists tend to be younger than *Estrada* and rock artists, and their main audience is teenagers and young adults, in the cities mainly high school and university students. TV presentations of these artists are colourful and trendy, imitating Russian pop stars and foreign artists on MTV. After listening to new *popsa* in 2006 I noticed that the technical quality of this genre has increased tremendously in recent years.

The fourth musical genre in Sakha is folk music (*fol'klornaya muzyka*). Folk musicians are not only those who are active in village culture houses: there are also many artists with an academic education, especially singers who, among other styles, perform traditional music. Folk music is even more in demand abroad than at home and therefore folk musicians travel a lot, visiting folk music festivals all over the world.

One particularity of Sakha music used to be the lack of strict boundaries between genres. Not only did the best artists perform in multiple styles, and were very successful in this (Valentina Romanova, Saina), but in the Sakha music scene there was also hardly any polarisation between rock and pop music, as we see in the West.[1]

Giving performances on the other side of the Ural Mountains is nothing new for Sakha musicians. In the Soviet period artists and music groups often played at festivals in other parts of the Soviet Union. Sakha music was often performed in Moscow and Leningrad as well as in the Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and other Soviet republics in the European part of the union. In very rare cases Sakha artists were allowed to perform outside the socialist block and, indeed, the luckiest ones performed at festivals in Western Europe or North America.

The collapse of the Socialist world took place concurrently with the growth in popularity of world music. At the same time it was a period of rapid development in the Soviet music scene. Since the end of the 1980s, alternative music collectives, artists and DJs gained more public attention and acceptance. Music that was censored or not supported a few years before got airplay and TV exposure (Cushman 1995). In fact, in the territory of the former Soviet Union, the beginning of the nineties was the best time in terms of alternative and ethnic music. It was still relatively inexpensive to produce music – rehearsal rooms were easy and cheap to rent, the number of studios was small but neither were they very expensive. For an underground and/or unknown band the possibility to get radio airplay or TV exposure was higher than ever before, or after, and many journals published stories and interviews with non-commercial bands. Subsequently during this period contacts with the Western music business were successfully established.

Everything from the Soviet Union and Socialist block was exotic during this period, including the music. The Western media was briefly interested in covering Eastern artists who also performed in Western clubs and festivals. At this time, Sakha music – together with other musical and regional styles – received quite a lot of media attention. My first encounter with Sakha music was around 1990, when a legendary music journalist and DJ Artem Troitskiy played a concert by the Sakha rock group Aital in his extremely popular TV show *Programma A*. He introduced Aital as one of the best Sakha music groups and defined their style as shamanic rock The period of *perestroika* made contact between Sakha artists with Western promoters and artists possible. It became possible to travel to foreign countries to perform at festivals, while foreigners were also able to travel to Sakha to discover the local music. Simultaneously, this period overlapped with the increasing popularity of world music, ethnic sounds from 'other countries' (see Erlmann 1994; Pietilä 2009). It is not surprising that foreigners and also Russians from the European part of Russia were amazed by the nature and richness of Sakha music. The pride that Sakha people have about their culture was also expressed in the large number of artists who were one way or another engaged in performing 'traditional' music. There were and still are several solo artists, bands or temporary music projects that attempt to perform very traditional Sakha and northern indigenous music, or mix it with rock, jazz or pop. Notwithstanding the fact that Western interest in exotic music is often interpreted as the "fetishisation of local flavour" and "asymmetric cultural imperialism" (Stokes 2004: 53, 55) Sakha artists saw this as a possibility to be visible behind the former Iron Curtain. From their point of view, the Sakha 'local flavour' was the uniqueness of their culture, a distinct Sakha spirituality that they had to offer to the world. Therefore, unlike in Africa, there was little conflict between

local Sakha music business interests and priorities and the global world music business (Laing 2009: 29).

The Sakha people were not pushed into the "global frame of reference" (Stokes 2004: 55). By looking at the Soviet period of Sakha pop and folk music, then one notices a strong emphasis on the spirituality of the 'northern people' and the glorification of Sakha history and shamanism. Therefore, artists did not see themselves as forced to change the focus of their music. Moreover, they were keen to stick with that focus. For example, during my research period in Sakha, I never heard a work or drinking song as an example of folklore on stage or at an official event. In fact, Sakha artists love to perform such music while sitting in each other's kitchens or drinking backstage. Most often I heard songs about shamanism or Sakha warriors, or songs dedicated to horses (which are considered holy in Sakha culture) and to the beauty of the northern country at concerts. At such performances, artists are usually dressed in modified Sakha 'national costumes' of dark fur clothes, horse-hair whips, heavy silver jewellery and hunting knives. The whole appearance was usually very gloomy and depressive: monotonous music combined with fantastic (sometimes even a science-fiction-like) appearance. The glorification of the spirituality of the Sakha people made the whole Sakha culture seem very mystic both for the Sakha artists and the non-Sakha audience.

European listeners and Sakha artists became aware not only of their cultural but also of the physical distance between their homeland and the main regions of their foreign audience. Starting at the beginning of the 1990s, Sakha artists and musicians began to travel and perform actively outside their home republic. In many cases, these trips were financed by offices of culture in the Republic of Sakha. Many artists whom I know performed in Moscow as 'cultural ambassadors' of the Sakha people at events like the opening of the Sakha Days, during the celebrations of the 60th Victory Day celebration of the end of the Second World War, folklore festivals and so forth. There is no need to emphasise that music performed at such events is and has always been, at least to some extent, Sakha, i.e. containing distinct features of traditional folk music like blessings and ritual songs. On the occasions when there is a need to 'represent the Sakha culture' the music of the mouth harp (an instrument associated with the North and shamanistic mystique) is particularly popular.

Apart from participating in Russian festivals to celebrate Sakha identity, Sakha artists began to travel abroad. According to my informants, the main reason was to participate in folklore festivals. Such festivals spread out over a large area became the travel routes of the Sakha artists. I know artists who visited the USA, UK, and Japan on many occasions, and also toured in Europe. For instance, Stepanida Borissova, a highly respected folk music diva, has toured in Germany many times, visiting even small cities. Many artists (German and Klavdiya Khatylayevy,[2] Varya Amanatova, Valentina Romanova) have also become nominees for prizes at such guest appearances. When visiting these artists, one notices one or many framed diplomas on the wall, which are shown to visitors with great pride. Attending festivals and giving concerts outside of Sakha is a matter of prestige. The media gladly and frequently covers such events, featuring the events as matters of national importance. Indeed, concerts of Sakha artists abroad are usually reported as 'X represented our country in France, Germany, England, etc.' In the media, prizes won at these festivals are equated to trophies won at sports games, which says a lot about the importance of music prizes in the sports-crazed Republic of

Sakha. Performing abroad is also a matter of passive rivalry among the artists, themselves the subject of constant gossip and jealousy. For this reason, Sakha artists try to establish contacts in the Western music scene and keep their contact persons a secret. Performing in Western countries does not only mean the opportunity to travel but also involves considerable sums of money. The amount earned is unknown to me, but it is sufficient to buy new instruments, sometimes even to renovate homes. Therefore, performing abroad is not only a matter of prestige but is also financially profitable. This, in turn, increases the importance of producing music that would be attractive for a Western audience.

I have met many of these artists who have successfully performed abroad. When in 2001 I visited a Sakha couple German and Klavdiya Khatylaevy, they played me their old and new songs for about one and a half hours. In 2006, British scholars and I attended a concert by Aiarkhaan – a prominent female folk music group – in the Centre of Sakha Culture in Yakutsk.[3] I have also seen Varya Amanatova, Valentina Romanova and Stepanida Borissova perform folk music with mouth harps, shamanic drums and rattles. Despite their announcements that the songs they play are 'very ancient' I have my doubts about this. First, I have seen documentaries shot in the 1960s and 1970s about village singers and there is a significant difference between music performed by a professional singer with academic music schooling and a non-educated village musician. Second, many singers have told me that they have modified songs or created new songs. Some singers even go as far as to modify the whole style. Savigliano (1995: 2) calls this process "autoexoticization" by musicians with the aim of better marketing themselves. However, Siberian (and other Soviet peoples) have had a distinct history of re-conceptualisation of their tradition. In the Soviet era, the urge to create a 'national' modern culture resulted in the adaption of ethnic elements into the pop and classic music (see Rothstein 1980; Shakhnazarova 2001; Smith 2002; Tomoff 2003; Merchant 2009; Ninoshvili 2009; Rancier 2009). One consequence was the simultaneous existence of several competing concepts of tradition in Siberia (Donahoe, Habeck 2011; King 2011). Therefore, it was not unusual for artists to choose the 'appropriate' version of their music as long as it was seen as 'traditional'. However, the Soviet-era institutionalisation of the cultivation of tradition often caused a situation in which local culture officials had a very clear idea of how particular genres should be performed and were extremely intolerant to the "allegories of technological progress" (Savigliano 1995: 82). For example, Khatylayevy told me that when they started performing as a mouth harp duo they also introduced new ways of performing in which one of them played rhythm, the other played the lead melody. After this they were banned from many events in Yakutsk because purists among the organisers accused them of spoiling traditional mouth harp music. However, the couple is one of the most successful Sakha folk groups performing abroad, having received many important prizes. As is the nature of academic/professional folk music, it is more listener-friendly than its non-professional equivalent. Modification of mouth harp music is not only the expression of artistic freedom but also serves the goal of being more compatible with the tastes of the folk/world music festival audiences.

Another important issue is throat singing. On Sakha folk music CD samplers issued at various times and in various places, one hardly finds anything that is referred to as throat singing. However, some artists like Stepanida Borissova tour successfully

abroad performing 'Sakha throat singing' or even more often 'Siberian throat singing'. The term throat singing became world famous with Tuvan music and groups like Yat-Kha or Huun Huur Tu. Today, throat singing is among other things a good marketing tool, opening doors to festival organisers and music producers. Stepanida Borissova was extremely successful in exploiting this category and in the early 1990s, when she released a CD titled "Stepanida Borissova and Hulu Project" in Finland. Since then, she has been touring Europe constantly. Alongside her international success, her position in the Sakha music scene became very prominent. In 2006, she was the headliner of open-air concerts in Yakutsk.

EUROPEAN IN ASIA

Ethnic music and its modifications are not the only export article of the Sakha music scene. As interesting as it is, for a very brief period around 2006, Sakha artists attempted to establish themselves as templates of European music culture in Asian countries. This short period required another type of the autoexoticisation. The pop music tradition in Sakha music goes back to the 1960s. When looking at the production of CDs and cassettes in the Republic of Sakha, *estrada* and *popsa* are definitely the music styles that dominate the output of the local music industry. Pop music is important for Sakha artists in terms of popularity and income. The possibilities of performing it (at an increasing number of clubs and events), getting airplay (an increasing number of radio private stations that play this music) and earning more money by performing such music have increased. National pop music is often an object of debates in countries outside of the Anglo-American sphere, where the influence of global pop is viewed as a hegemonic force that erases national particularities (see Larkey 1992; Pennycook 2007; Regev 2007; Luvaas 2009; Leppänen, Pietikäinen 2010; Varis, Wang 2011). The brief attempt at marketing Sakha pop music in China as European pop demonstrates another form of authenticity that – contrary to the ethnic music in the West – should not contain 'locality' in its sonic scripture. In the attempt to market Sakha pop in China, the music was freed from the local colour and presented as global 'European' pop.

Until 2001, Sakha pop was rarely performed outside Sakha. On a few occasions, some artists participated in *estrada* contests outside of the Republic of Sakha performing light popular dance music, but it was more important in terms of prestige (as such events were covered on TV and in newspapers – for example Varya Amanatova performing at the Siberian *estrada* festival in Buryatia in 2002) than income, albeit such occasions were quite rare. Such is, for example, the situation when Varya Amanatova met the popular Mongolian singer Nariana in Buryatia. Already at the festival, they formed a friendship which led to Varya singing backing vocals for the Mongolian diva at the festival. Further development of this contact was the arrival of Nariana in Yakutsk in 2003 where she performed many successful concerts.

Because *estrada* is generally performed with pre-recorded playbacks and no live musicians, organising the tours are quite simple and inexpensive – one needs only the equipment for the singers and a CD player. On a return visit, Varya toured with Nariana for many weeks in Mongolia. She played me recordings of the concerts and to my surprise I heard how she preferred to sing in Russian. At the end of concerts she performed

duets with Nariana, singing famous Russian romantic ballads. What struck me was the fact that Varya's repertoire hardly included any songs with distinctive Sakha melodies or other Sakha features. Outside Sakha she wore a stylised Sakha folk costume and used a mouth harp in her songs, which was not the case in Mongolian videos. When abroad Varya stressed her Sakha origin when talking between songs, introducing the Sakha culture in a few sentences. This was not the case here, either. On the contrary, the entire appearance of Varya resembled that of a European pop diva. This was an assumed role, since she often appeared on stage in Yakutsk where she was and is a very popular artist in the contemporary disco-pop scene. This tour in Mongolia was not the only one for Varya. Next year she repeated it, again giving a series of concerts with Nariana in Mongolia. These concerts had a similar structure to the year before: Varya performed a series of *estrada* and *popsa* songs and concluded the show with some duets with Nariana. The only difference from the concerts of the first tour was that Varya also performed one or two songs in Mongolian. Varya earned some money in Mongolia, not as much as she would have for performing at a Western folklore festival, but enough to buy some new clothes and update her wardrobe.

Varya's Mongolian tours, of course, were widely covered in the media in Yakutsk and this coverage incited rumours among artists and people involved in the music business. Even more rumours concerned Varya's next project – performing in China. Via Mongolia Varya made contacts with Chinese producers and they offered her a tour of China. The China project was more serious and also ambitious because she was also given the possibility to record an album in Chinese. The gossip of the Sakha music scene ran wild when Varya announced the details of this story. All the Sakha tabloid and serious media discussed the issue for weeks and the success story spread throughout the nation. Indeed, Varya Amanatova did record an album in China. The music on the album is very sweet and plays on the image of European pop being sung in Chinese. Apart from the lyrics, Varya had learned some phrases in Chinese to introduce herself and her music for the audience. Nevertheless, the tour and CD were not exactly successful. She gave sold-out concerts but she had peaked and this was not followed by another album or tour. The Sakha media ignored that side of the story and portrayed it as another success story and a sign of how modern Sakha culture is gaining popularity beyond the country's borders. China is a huge music market and Varya's Chinese affair inspired many Sakha artists and producers/managers to seek contacts with Chinese music managers. The emergence of many new producers in Yakutsk in 2005–2006 who planned to establish lucrative contacts with Chinese producers and managers was a new strategy in the music scene. It is significant that all these young producers who looked for contacts in China were music entrepreneurs whose protégés were young *popsa* artists and groups. Many of them had been successful disco artists a few years before who decided to build up their own studio and concert agency. The segment of Sakha music that had copied Western commercial pop music like disco, hiphop and RnB was being marketed and there was in general a certain distance from their traditional music. Western-style pop music was and is in many non-European countries associated with hedonism and modernity and with participation in the globalised commercial cultural arena, whereas ethnic music is often seen as old fashioned and musically not very interesting (see, for example, Toop 1992; Erlmann 1994). Performing global pop also means a certain degree of de-territorialisation: artists feel part of international, rather than national, culture

(Luvaas 2009: 4, 9). This trend can be seen as a reference to the postcolonial situation in which artists who perform Western pop and rock acknowledge these styles of music as more prestigious, related to global cultural centres and the West, and concede that these genres shape mainstream music and fashion. In contrast to the tradition and spirituality of ethnic music, pop artists embody a certain modernity and consumption, global trends that are superior to the peripheral regional culture.

Up to the end of my fieldwork in July 2007 I had not heard any other success stories about Sakha artists in China, although but I met many producers who were keen to endorse it. These producers sent promo materials to Chinese concert agencies and gained some limited success, with Sakha pop music getting some airplay on Chinese radio and a few young singers having the chance to perform in Chinese discotheques. First of all, young promoters tried to learn from Varya Amanatova how to establish contacts with the Chinese music business and understand the demands on the artists. Varya's experience with the Chinese music business was well-known on the small artist's circuit in Yakutsk and therefore it was no wonder that other people tried to get a foot in the Chinese pop market as performers of contemporary pop music.

I met Varya after her Chinese tour to discuss her experience with Chinese audiences and the music business there. She explained to me that Chinese managers were interested in her as a pop singer from their first meeting. In negotiations about a possible tour and other arrangements it was stressed on several occasions that Varya Amanatova was expected to perform modern pop music without any folklore elements. "Chinese like western pop," she explained me, "for them, Russia is a European country. People who come from there are exotic and must perform European music." (FM 2007) As I heard, she had to dress in a 'European style' and to many people she appeared 'almost European', since her North Asian appearance is different from how the Chinese look. Authenticity in pop music is a matter of interpretation (see Middleton 2001) and in the Sakha case caters to different perceptions of distances and space as a result of what the Chinese believed to be a 'European style'. Varya's music was cleansed of any reference to her Asian ethnicity when she performed in Chinese. According to the audience perception, this did not decrease her 'Europeanness' because her music concurred with what people in China expected Western pop music to sound like. Moreover, Varya was an artist from a European country, which also delivered a certain degree of the authenticity. A 'European style' stage costume symbolised the Western nature of her music and carried more weight than her non-European physical appearance. Varya's succinct Chinese period demonstrated her flexible approach in reacting to the demands of the audience. Being a successful folk music singer and having participated in many folk music festivals in the USA and elsewhere, she was able to adapt herself to performing other types of music when needed.

HYBRIDITY TALK

One concept of the world of popular culture is that it is seen as a dream world, a place for public fantasy (Storey 1998: 12). In this paper I have discussed the marketing strategies and activities of Sakha artists in two different fields: as representatives of 'traditional' culture in the West and as representatives of Western pop culture in the East.

In both cases the artists attempted to satisfy the public fantasy held by their audiences, fitting into the image of the traditional Siberian or Asian or contemporary European.

In cultural studies the audience's taste and artists are manipulated by a phenomenon in business referred to as the "total institution" (Clarke 1992). The artist's music and image are manipulated and controlled by record companies, managers and agents who attempt to form a product that is easily marketable (Negus 1999). Theodor Adorno speaks about the "cultural industry" as a "monopolistic" industry (cited in Hutnyk 2000: 19). The impact and the dominant role of managers, marketing specialists and producers in the culture industry is of course true, but this does not mean that other agents – the artists – have no will or choice. In my article I have demonstrated the position of artists in the music business who manipulate the expectations of the audience to get access to resources – prestige and money.

Artists often try to predict what is expected from them and shape their music and appearance with the aim of pleasing the audience, managers and promoters. John Hutnyk (2000: 3–4) writes at the beginning of his book *Critique of Exotica* how Asian music is often viewed as an intellectual music. He draws his examples from music of Indian, Pakistani and Bengali origin. Things are not much different when 'shamanic music' comes into play. Arctic music is consumed by a Euro-American audience as spiritual, esoteric and containing a mystical energy. There is the phenomenon of Otherness that people want to see in the performances of the Sakha artists. The fact that a large audience for Sakha artists is non-Sakha, both at home and abroad, shows that the audience expects the emphasis on mysticism, intellectuality and exoticism. To meet the promoters' and audience's expectations, artists adapt their repertoire to meet people's fantasies. The same goes for commercial pop music in China. The Chinese audience is unlikely to dream about intellectuality in pop music. But they too definitely seek the Other and the exotic that for Chinese music consumers is represented by a 'European pop artist'. To fit into this framework, artists should perform a particular kind of music and have a particular style of appearance.

A very popular approach within cultural studies is to talk about hybridity. Originally, hybridity in cultural/youth studies was used in the discussion about marginal social group identity and its cultural forms (for example, Hebdidge 1979). But the concept of hybridity can also be used when discussing the manipulation of music. Jo Haynes (2005: 369) argues that the balance between hybridisation and authenticity is one dilemma in world music. City dwellers and professional artists performing 'ancient traditional music' and artists with Asian features satisfying their audience's thirst for European contemporary pop music is also one expression of this hybridity. From a 'culture industry' viewpoint it is a process of "commodification of the Other" (Durham, Kellner 2001: 22). However, artists have their own agency within this framework. They "exploit" the audience's "fantasies about the 'Other'" and profit from it (ibid.: 23). Hiphop and black culture in general is something that in cultural studies is used as an archetype and the best example of hybridity. Paul Gilroy writes about how hiphop claims that this genre, the nature of which is based on the concept of hybridity, has nevertheless become a "symbol of racial authenticity" (cited in Hutnyk 2000: 19). The "facts of blackness" are fluid, cultural, political and social categories that can be flexibly remade in order to fit into the general idea about black culture (Gray 2001: 443). Motti Regev discusses Otherness, national uniqueness and rock music criteria in the

Argentinian and Israeli rock scenes, and concludes that when the music finds a balance between the interior and exterior, fans have no problems identifying themselves with the music (Regev 2007: 318, 322). The authenticity of various forms of Sakha music is illusionary: musicians offer a glimpse into the dream like world of 'Europe' or 'Asia'. The Sakha rock groups who mix their music with the mouth harp and appear on stage in folk costumes, or the pop artists who use electronic pre-recorded playbacks in a Western style, are also carriers of the same authenticity that hiphop is for its audience and performers. Hutnyk writes that the "audience is largely uncritical of world music" (2000: 22) and the pop music audience's enthusiasm to pick up what the trends deliver is discussed in many works. All this is true. This "tolerance" is used by the Sakha artists for whom "hybridity means access to the market" (Hutnyk 2000: 94). The common term for the Sakha 'traditional' music in the West and the 'contemporary European pop' in the East is exotic. There is a culture industry that helps people to "consume exotica" (cf. Hutnyk 2000: 94, 134) and artists adapt themselves to it.

CONCLUSION

The question is how can one artist be at the same time 'traditionally Asian' and a 'contemporarily European'. Here one has to take into account the ambivalent content of Sakha culture and the people themselves. On the one hand the Sakha people believe in their glorious past as great Asian warriors, and on the other hand they have created their literacy and other forms of 'high culture' from a Russian template, and through Russia have a culture based on a European model. Sakha culture is by nature hybrid. It is the result of the historical colonial struggle of political and economic power both in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union. Therefore, ideologically there was and is no contradiction in adapting elements of their Asian and European cultures and showing it to non-Sakha people. The hybridity of Sakha culture is supported by the opinion that there is no contradiction in incorporating various elements of the East and West into their culture; on the contrary, this was seen as an enrichment, a development and a strengthening of Sakha culture.

The other side of this coin is the perceived Asian or European authenticity of Sakha music. What makes this authenticity credible is the geographical origin and distance. For the audience, the artist comes from a distant place and embodies another culture. It seems that the distance the music has to travel adds substantially to the 'realness' of the performed music. The Arctic or Europe are reduced to stereotypical and coherent concepts that Sakha artists have to exploit in order to reach the necessary degree of authenticity. The fact that the artists come from a region that is located far away reenforces their Otherness and exotic qualities and helps to establish their artistic credibility as people belonging to a different cultural sphere. In this way, distance helps to create musical concepts that are turned into marketable products.

NOTES

1 This situtation changed rapidly after the discussed period and currently the Sakha music scene is strictly divided between folk, ethnorock and pop with very little crossover (see Ventsel 2010; 2012).

2 In 2011 Khatylayevy released a CD in France.

3 In 2012 Aiarkhaan performed at WOMEX, a central event for world music, and were guests on various BBC radio shows. In 2013 they toured Europe, mainly Germany.

SOURCES

FM – Author's field notes and interviews in the Republic of Sakha between 2000 and 2012. During that period I conducted dozens of formal interviews with artists. However, more important for my research than interviews are documented spontaneous discussions and field notes from public events or rehearsals.

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ON THE EDGE OF SPACE AND TIME: EVANGELICAL MISSIONARIES IN THE POST-SOVIET ARCTIC

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ABSTRACT*
Evangelical missionaries have missionised pretty much throughout Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Among their favourite targets are the small-numbered indigenous groups in the Russian Arctic, where the numbers of converts are steadily growing. One particular denomination, known as the Unregistered Baptists, are among the leading agents of religious change in the North today. They are driven by the promise of the return of Christ after the gospel is preached "at the ends of the earth". I suggest that the Baptists' agenda is shaped, on the one hand, by the literal reading of the Bible, which allows them to be the divine instruments at the end times and, on the other hand, by the idea of Russia's special role in God's salvation plan. I shall analyse the Baptists' ideas and practices, using among others Bakhtin's concept of chronotope in order to demonstrate how powerful narratives are created and lived.

KEYWORDS: Christian missionaries • eschatology • literalism • chronotope • Nenets

Pavel, a Russian-Ukrainian Baptist missionary, has colourfully described his journey to Nenets reindeer herders in August 1997. A rented tank-like vehicle took Pavel from the nearest settlement to a reindeer herding camp in the tundra not far from the Arctic Ocean. He travelled with a young Nenets man called Ivan. Baptised three years earlier, Ivan was the first convert among the Nenets and served as a guide and interpreter for Pavel on his mission trips in the tundra. After reaching his home tent, Ivan and his pagan father asked the driver to help them transport firewood from the seashore to the camp, which was set up a few kilometres inland. In this vehicle, they went to the shore where, next to large piles of driftwood, there was a small hut temporarily occupied by a Russian family who spent their holiday fishing. Pavel depicts the encounter like this in his mission report:[1]

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> These people were starving for the true Bread. I told them about the plan of salvation that '[the gospel] shall be preached to the ends of the earth and then shall the end come...' These were historical days when all-powerful God fulfilled his Word. The ends of the earth were only ten metres from us! God miraculously spoke to their hearts and they prayed. I persuaded them to read the Word and pray.

Years later, Pavel stressed in a conversation that he had then literally reached the ends of the earth and that this was the sign that very little time was left before Christ would return.

Since the early 1990s, similar scenes of evangelisation have become frequent throughout the post-atheist country where multiple domestic and foreign Protestant mission organisations have spread rapidly. The Russian Arctic seems to have received disproportionately more attention in the post-Soviet period than many other regions, especially bearing in mind how few people live there and how difficult is to reach them. However, missionaries have met considerable success in some areas. I ask why they have made significant efforts to convert people in this part of the world. By exploring the activities, ideologies and rhetoric of the missionaries, I shall suggest that the heightened attention to the North is not random but has its cosmological reasons embedded in the missionaries' specific concepts of space and time. Central to my overall argument is that remoteness and the conquest of it is an especially attractive idea for those Christians whose identity is based on the literal reading of the Bible and the imitative suffering of Jesus and his disciples. I shall focus on a particular Russian evangelical group called the Unregistered Baptists who have invested more time, energy and resources in spreading the Gospel among indigenous groups in the Russian Arctic than most other religious groups.

Within the framework of the 'anthropology of Christianity' many have discussed how Christianity has travelled and taken root throughout the globalising world, especially in Latin America, Melanesia, Africa, where various forms of it have spread remarkably quickly (for example, Robbins 2003; Hann 2007; Bialecki et al. 2008; Anderson et al. 2010). In these 'remote' parts of the world a traditional eye-to-eye mission encounter is the most usual pattern, even if there are other ways in which Christianity spreads today, be this via televangelism or other mass media means. In other words, Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists and others still dispatch their missionaries to distant communities throughout the world. Evidently, there is a great variety of styles in missionary practices and (in)sensitivities towards the local cultural contexts, even if Christian missionisation in general demonstrates "a certain consistency, constancy, and persistence" (Burridge 1991: ix).

However, we do not find too many detailed ethnographic analyses of missionary activities, as the focus is usually on the local reception of Christianity. When analysing mission encounters, for a long time anthropologists were interested in the missionaries' impact on the non-Christians and much less in the missionaries themselves who were converting these people (Beidelman 1974: 235). The reason for this systematic neglect was partly to do with anthropology being a discipline of non-modern societies in which only 'traditional' elements were investigated, and partly to do with the ambiguous and complicated relationship between anthropologists and missionaries (Stipe 1980; van der Geest 1990; van der Geest, Kirby 1992), which together created a significant silence. In the 1970s and 1980s, a more methodical study of missionaries began to emerge – although

it was never to become a prominent topic (Miller 1970; 1981; Beidelman 1974; 1982; Burridge 1978; Shapiro 1981; Schneider, Lindenbaum 1987; Huber 1988; James and Johnson 1988).[2] The large part of this recent anthropological work on missionaries has been based on archival or published sources, concentrating on the specific personalities of missionaries, institutions, ideologies and narratives from the past (for example, Clifford 1982; Comaroff, Comaroff 1991; 1997; Fienup-Riordan 1991; Peel 1995; Kan 1999; Meyer 1999; Znamenski 1999; Douglas 2001; Kipp 2004; Keane 2007; Toulouze 2009). The missionaries' practices and concepts in today's mission encounters have received much less attention (but see, for example, Orta 2004; Hovland 2009; Bielo 2011; Elisha 2011).[3]

My aim here is to depict missionaries' ideas and actions as I have learned these during my recent field trips to the nomadic Nenets who have recently been evangelised. I have lived with reindeer herding families for shorter and longer periods in and around the Polar Urals, as well as frequented the prayer house in the city of Vorkuta.[4] This is the area where the Russian Unregistered Baptists have been particularly successful, having baptised around two hundred adults from the nearby Nenets communities. Today, the new Christians constitute approximately half of the local Nenets population.[5] This success story resonates in the missionaries' sermons as well as in the official church literature, which attribute particular importance to the fact that all this is taking place 'at the world's edge'.

THE LITERAL END

The trope of the world's edge populated with pagans has guided missionaries' activities, if not since Paul's times, then at least since Patrick, who Christianised the Irish in the 5th century. According to Richard Fletcher, Patrick "was the first person in Christian history to take the scriptural injunctions literally; to grasp that teaching all nations meant teaching even barbarians who lived beyond the frontiers of the Roman empire" (1999: 86). Like Ireland, the Russian Arctic is a perfect match for the ends of the earth where 'barbarians' live. Although Patrick's agenda was driven by Jesus' command to spread the Gospel to all nations, it was only in the late 18th century and early 19th century that the ideal of the total evangelisation (also known as "the great commission") became more deeply rooted in the Protestants' agenda. Until then the majority of Protestants took Jesus' command as a project that had been finished by the end of the apostolic age and was thus not part of the continuing task for current generations (McGrath 2007: 177).[6]

The increasing interest in worldwide missionisation coincided with the emergence of a new language ideology based on the literal reading of the Bible. Despite the occasional appearance of literalism since the Reformation, or even earlier, the idea of Biblical inerrancy can be characterised as essentially "a modern preoccupation" (Armstrong 2001: 11). Karen Armstrong has stated, "Before the modern period, Jews, Christians, and Muslims all relished highly allegorical, symbolic, and esoteric interpretations of their sacred texts" (ibid.). Only by the early 20th century had interpreting the Bible literally become a core practice for Christians. They came to be known as fundamentalists. The Russian Unregistered Baptist missionaries belong to this tradition. However, analysing literalism poses certain challenges. Anthropologist Simon Coleman has argued

that when addressing the literalist world of conservative Christians, anthropologists are themselves too literalist (2006: 58; see also Bielo 2009). Joel Robbins endorses Coleman's criticism by saying that anthropologists "have not thought it possible to produce the kind of nuanced account of Christian literalist practice they would want to have of most other kinds of practice in the world [...] or at least they have not been interested in providing one" (2006: 220). In this paper, I try to provide a detailed analysis of Christian literalist practices by looking at how literalist ideology inspires, justifies and creates space for missionaries' actions.

In his compelling book *Serving the Word*, Vincent Crapanzano has argued that American fundamentalists' literalism is largely non-creative, as they "read Scripture as though it were an instruction manual, verse by verse, passage by passage, story by story, always in a very narrow manner, with little regard for context" (2000: 146). While agreeing with parts of this, nevertheless, I would like to argue that in otherwise restricted ideological settings and ritualised use of authoritative language, literalism as practice is not necessarily "narrow" but enables considerable creativity, and depends on the context in which an interpretive tradition is continuously negotiated. One could agree with the position that there is an inevitable tension between the literalists' language ideology and the literalists' practices (Keane 2007: 101). Susan Harding has demonstrated this discrepancy in the case of the American fundamentalist evangelicals led by Jerry Falwell:

> The interpretive tradition is literalist in the sense that it presumes the Bible to be true and literally God's Word, but the interpretive practices themselves are not simply literalist. The biblical text is considered fixed and inerrant, and it means what God intended it to mean, but discerning that meaning is not simple or sure or constant. The Bible is read within a complex, multidimensional, shifting field of fundamental Baptist (becoming evangelical) folk-narrative practices, and so are the lives of preachers and their peoples. (Harding 2000: 28)

The Russian Baptists I know read the Bible every day: they certainly use it as a manual, as Crapanzano has argued, alongside other texts published and circulated by their own church, believing that these texts are highly pertinent to their lives. They interpret their everyday experiences in the scriptural mode, being "driven by a search for relevance" (Malley 2004: 117). This careful process of recasting one's thoughts and self-expression is not idiosyncratic but is in dialogue with the patterns of interpretations, which are shaped by authoritative members like local pastors or church leaders. Even the use of the Bible citations that each Baptist knows by heart and considers his or her favourite depends on the dominating currents in the church and wider society.

PAVEL

Let me return to the opening scene in which the Baptist missionary Pavel expresses himself in biblical language. In his first act of evangelisation on the shore of the Arctic Ocean, Pavel juxtaposes the Bible verses that guide his and his fellow missionaries' actions in the field: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the

ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8; cf. also Acts 13:47), and "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). While at the coast, Pavel's literalist stance set him not only at the nexus between the present and the future but also between human and divine agency. He represents himself both as a sign and instrument of the end times embodying God's will and power. The awakened and praying Russian family and a Nenets convert nearby was for him a convincing proof of how God's plan was being fulfilled.

What is significant in his rhetoric is that time became visible in this liminal space: the vectors of space and time were about to meet in a straight line and thus the imagined future was to become present. On the one end of the temporal scale, there was a scriptural promise, which originated almost two thousand years ago when Jesus pledged to come back. On the other end, there were signs of the end times that were visible in the morally degrading world, indicating that Jesus's return was imminent. As a missionary on the margins, Pavel used every opportunity to use these literalist motifs to map out the apocalyptic geography.

Missionaries are expected to be heroic individuals. Pavel's individual agency has been behind the majority of conversions to Baptism among the western Nenets. He is of Ukrainian origin, as are many other Baptist missionaries in Russia (Wanner 2007). He found his way to Vorkuta by being conscripted into the army in Vorkuta in 1979. After being released from the army, Pavel took his wife and son to Vorkuta and started working in a coal mine, attracted by a high salary and other "northern privileges". He soon joined the local Baptist congregation, founded by released Gulag prisoners in 1947 (*Podrazhayte* 2001: 72–74) and became its presbyter in 1990. Pavel made his first mission trip to the tundra in the mid-1990s. A few years later he retired from work and since then he has dedicated most of his time to travelling and evangelising in the tundra.

In our conversations, Pavel stressed that his task was to take God's Word to the ends of the earth. His main tool was witnessing (*свидетельство*), talking of God, which included conversations, singing, and handing out devotional literature. At the beginning, one of the biggest challenges was transport. In the 1990s, Pavel relied on rented transport as well as motor sledges bought with donations. Since 2000, he has moved across the tundra on a Trekol, a capable all-terrain vehicle with large wheels, which has given him access to the remotest reindeer herding camps that outsiders rarely visit. This vehicle and Pavel's repair ability have given the local Baptists the edge over other missionaries (for example, local Pentecostals) who have less reliable means of transportation.

Today, evangelical missionaries are often the only ones (apart from a few others like anthropologists) who are motivated to visit indigenous people in the sparsely populated areas with the challenging climate and landscape. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and its heavily subsidised transport system, in general there has recently been much less movement across the vast expanses of the North. The once frequent sight of all-terrain vehicles or helicopters transporting goods, meat, fish, and people has become a rarity in most regions in the post-Soviet period because of its high cost.[7] In addition, almost all the so-called cultural-educative projects that the state initiated in the Soviet period among the tundra and taiga dwellers have been stopped.[8] Since the early 1990s, due to the lack of resources and motivation, only a few outsiders have managed to move across the tundra and taiga.

Pavel is probably one of the most successful missionaries in the International Union of Churches of Evangelical Christian-Baptists (IUCECB).[9] The Union was the largest illegal religious organisation during the Soviet era. In the early post-Soviet period, when the state stopped persecuting evangelicals and missionary work became unhindered once again, the Unregistered Baptists began to evangelise widely, annoying the state privileged Russian Orthodox Church as well as indigenous activists who usually prefer traditionalist forms of religion.

Throughout their earlier history, the Russian Baptists evangelised in very constrained circumstances.[10] Although the public image of the Baptists is one of a new Christian "sect" in Russia, the presence of Baptists dates back to the 1860s (Coleman 2005). The branch of the Unregistered Baptists was born in 1961 in a "spiritual awakening" (*духовное пробуждение*) when many split off from the mainstream Baptist movement, blaming its leaders for cooperating with the atheist state. The main accusation was that the Registered Baptists submitted to the authorities, who ordered that anti-evangelical instructions (for example, "to end unhealthy missionary tendencies") be sent out to the local congregations. Although all religious groups were harassed in the post-Stalinist Soviet period, among stubborn Unregistered Baptists the number of the repressed was particularly high. Hundreds of believers were imprisoned; in some cases their houses were confiscated and children forcibly taken away and placed in state orphanages (Kryuchkov 2008; see also Wanner 2007). Today, the Unregistered Baptists emphasise their heritage of martyrdom and use it actively for the reproduction of their identity as God's chosen people.

Although the UCECB opened its Department of Evangelism already in 1965, a large-scale missionising could only begin when the political situation changed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Today with its almost seventy thousand church members and 2900 churches or groups (*50 let* 2011), it is still thought to be one of the most conservative and anti-worldly Protestant denominations in post-atheist Russia (Bourdeaux, Filatov 2003: 185–194).[11] The Union's policies were worked out largely by one man, Gennadiy Kryuchkov (1926–2007), a long-time leader who lived for around twenty years in hiding (1969–1989). He was and is still appreciated as a "hero of faith", a God-chosen leader for the true church, and his views are seen as God-inspired and inerrant by the members of the Union, as one can read in the IUCECB's journal *Herald of Truth* (*Vestnik* 2007[4–5]: 64; 2007[6]: 31).[12]

According to Kryuchkov, the collapse of the Soviet Union took place because God decided to give an opportunity to His chosen people to evangelise, to continue the work of the early apostolic church. He writes in *Brotherly Leaflet*, "If the early apostolic church had lasted, the circumstances would have developed differently. It would have conquered the whole world and possibly already then evangelised 'unto the uttermost part of the earth' (Acts 1:8)" (*Tserkov* 2008: 183). Kryuchkov essentially argued that as the apostolic church of the first centuries had stopped short before the work was finished, the task of finishing the job fell on the shoulders of a small community of saved people in the Soviet Union. The atheist Soviet Union was claimed to be the land where the Antichrist had recently hit the hardest and God had a special plan for it, making Russia a pivotal place in world historical events.[13] In 1965, Kryuchkov prophesised about

their Union's special role: "Brothers, I have a proof that God has given our brotherhood a special place not only in our country but also in world Christianity. Some years will pass and we shall see it..." (*Vestnik* 1990[3]: 26)[14] The collapse of the Soviet Union and new freedom caused contradictory feelings. A text, probably also authored by Kryuchkov, explains how God directed these world historical events:

> Today the Lord has heard His servants' prayers, thirsty to save this world and thirsty to preach the message of salvation. And this is why He changes the circumstances and gives us a chance to distribute the literature and speak openly about the Saviour. All this is done by the Lord! He chose us not so that we could spend our lives quietly, feeling comfortable in payer house chairs, but so we would go out to the world and fearlessly preached His Word to the uttermost ends of the earth! The most important thing is that the Holy Spirit would help us, for we do God's work saintly. Then we can celebrate the success and Our Lord makes us glad of the days wherein we have seen evil.[15] (*Vestnik* 1991[2]: 4)

The Unregistered Baptists are convinced that God let widespread repressions to take place in order to separate the true believers from the false ones and then gave the freedom of evangelism because of the true believers' loyalty and unending prayers. Kryuchkov claimed that this freedom would last as long as God's people would be able "to receive God's strength and God's miracles" (2008: 252). At the same time, he repeatedly warned against the church becoming tempted by "liberalism, modernism, ecumenism" (ibid.: 315–316). In his words, all these vices characterise those Christians who do not follow "the narrow path". This path does not contain any social work, politics or other "worldly" activities that in the Baptists' words would corrupt God's true church on the earth. As they declare, their main principle "outside" the church is calling on individuals to repent while "inside" the church the aim is to be continuously sanctified. (Ibid.: 268)

There have been many difficult dilemmas on this narrow path. One has been foreign aid. In the early 1990s, Russia saw an unprecedented high number of foreign missions entering the country. Many of them wanted to co-operate and offered material help to the local churches.Kryuchkov hesitated. He pointed out that some ministers in the Union, with material gain on their minds, "opened the doors for all kinds of Western missions and 'teachers', who often propagated anti-evangelical and even heretic views" (ibid.: 318, see also p. 326). At the same time, the Union received substantial material help for its missionary work from foreign organisations. Lots of aid came, especially from an organisation called Friedenstimme, which was formed in 1978 by Baptists who were ethnic Germans living in the Soviet Union and who managed to emigrate to Germany, the Netherlands and some other Western countries in the 1970s (*Vestnik* 2011[4]: 38).[16] These foreigners admire those who are engaged in missionary activity "at the ends of the earth", especially in the North. A representative from Friedenstimme recently declared in *Herald of Truth* that the mission field opening up in the Russian North has special importance for them: "It is delightful that God's Word spreads further and further to the North. This is why Jesus Christ's command on preaching the Gospel remains the most important task of the mission today." (*Vestnik* 2011[4]: 39) Foreign donors are sometimes taken to indigenous converts in order to show where their funds have been spent.[17]

Relying on the classifications authored by the administrators and ethnographers, Baptists have turned the small nations into collectibles. Among others, Pavel has become an enthusiastic collector of unevangelised indigenous peoples. I heard Pavel talking of the need of saving the Nenets people, the Khanty people, the Komi people. He told me in a conversation:

> In fact, what is going on here, is not our influence but the influence of the Holy Spirit. This has to be understood. Only the people who do not understand this process may claim that this is our influence. [...] The Bible says, in front of God people from all nations, tribes and languages will stand. This means the Nenets, the Khanty, the Komi [...].

From the pulpit, Baptists often expressed their joy that in their brotherhood there were over fifty nationalities from all over the ex-Soviet Union, which allowed them to call their union proudly a "multinational family" or "multinational brotherhood" (*Vestnik* 1997[1–2]: 21; 50 let... 2011). They were perfectly aware that they would be able to save but individual souls here and there, and yet converting even one member from any ethnic group added a new 'nation' to the list. In the IUCECB, there is a special category of evangelists (*благовестники*) surveyed by the Department of Evangelism.[18] Young families are sent to particular locations with the aim of converting local people. Nikolai Antonyuk, Kryuchkov's successor as the leader of the Union, has described the recent successes in the mission field as follows:

> In the current period more than 450 families of our brotherhood work in the mission field. If one put stars on the map for all the towns and villages where our missionaries live, an interesting picture would appear – there are workers like stars in the sky. Leaving cosy flats, houses with all conveniences, they preach the Gospel in difficult conditions. Our task is to have more evangelists and to print more literature. (*Vestnik* 2009[6]: 9)

The Union runs a department of statistics, which counts all the church members, ministers, baptisms, locations of churches, tons of papers used for printing devotional literature, kilometres on mission journeys and so on. At each congress new numbers are made public, reflecting the expansion of the brotherhood. As the Union leaders explain, there are two ways in which God's people (*Божий народ*) multiply. The first is giving birth to more children and the other is winning new converts. By referring to the prohibition of birth control, Antonyuk announced at a congress that more children had been born in recent years as a result of "spiritual education of the parents who had been enlightened on the matter of family planning" (*Vestnik* 2009[6]: 8). The second is evangelisation. The Union has set as its aim the task of evangelising all nations, referring to passages from the New Testament (Matthew 24:14; 28:19; Mark 13:10, Luke 24:47; see also *Vestnik* 2000[1]: 4). The idea that the Christian message is universal and should be shared with everyone and each nation leads to a concept of total coverage. In reality, evangelisation is largely limited to the ex-Soviet Union.[19] As in the Roman times, "all nations" seem to live in "the known world". In other words, evangelising all ethnic groups living in the ex-Soviet Union alone, and especially on its margins, is likely to shift the balance and remove the last obstacles to the great final events.

Saint Paul offers an important example for the Russian missionaries (Pavel included, as we shall see further below). French philosopher Alain Badiou has described the apostle Paul as the first true universalist who dreamed of accomplishing his mission at the extreme edge of the empire:

> If his vision of things fervently embraces the dimension of the world and extends to the extreme limits of the empire (his dearest wish is to go to Spain, as if he, the Oriental, could only accomplish his mission at the extreme edge of the Occident), it is because urban cosmopolitanism and lengthy voyages have shaped its amplitude. (Badiou 2003: 21)

A similar logic can be seen in Antonyuk's speech at the Union's Congress in 2009, where he gave a special importance to the missionary work "at the ends of the earth":

> It has always been a spiritual concern for the brotherhood to bring the news about Christ even to the ends of the earth. Many small peoples of our country did not have the Gospel in their own language; some of them did not have any idea who was Jesus Christ. During a meeting of the Council of the Churches [the governing body of the Union], brothers from Siberia gave a list of the peoples living in the North and the brotherhood prayed for their awakening. (*Vestnik* 2009[6]: 9)

With the arrival of the freedom of evangelism, the question of who exactly were the peoples they should bring the good news to emerged. As a Union member from the Tyumen region writes:

> Twenty years ago, ministers in Siberia, awakened by God, zealously evangelised among the Northern peoples, who had not yet heard of Christ. First they learned the number of the small peoples (*народностей*) living at the ends of the earth. There turned out to be thirty-one of them. They instructed every church in our [Siberian] association to pray with concentration for one particular nation (*национальности*). (*Vestnik* 2010[3]: 27)

This number, "31", has been repeated here and there years later (*Vestnik* 2009[6]: 26; 2011[6]: 59). By the end of the Soviet period, there were officially 26 "small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East" enjoying certain legal privileges. This number of ethnic groups has since increased to forty in the 2000s. An anthropological truism is that these categories are never unambiguous. For instance, if one takes the 'Nenets', they are grouped together as 'a nation' without delving into the problem of blurred borders between various ethnolinguistic groups like the Tundra Nenets, the Forest Nenets, and the Komi-speaking Nenets. For the Baptists, who have a duty to evangelise "to all nations" (*всем народам*), the Nenets are as natural, unquestioned and objective a category as Jews or Philistines. Unwittingly, the Baptists have relied on the Russian ethnographic practice of delineating what an ethnic group is. The nation is thus as literal a unit as the kilometre or the number of copies of the Bible handed out.

This ideology is materialised in a recent calendar produced by the Union, under the title "Gospel to the ends of the earth" (*Евангелие до края земли*), there is a list that includes place names like Chukotka, Naryan-Mar, Magadan, Kamchatka, the Yamal Peninsula, and the Taimyr Peninsula (*50 let* 2011). Each region or settlement has a number of churches and groups next to it. On the same page, the names of the ethnic groups

who live "at the ends of the earth" and among whom church members exist are listed: the Nenets, Khanty, Komi, Zyryan,[20] Selkup, Yazidi,[21] Chukchi, Eskimo, Koryak, Aleut, Kamchadal, Yukaghir, Evenk, Enets, Nganasan, Dolgan. There are ordained pastors among some of these peoples, like the Chukchi, Khanty, and Nenets (see also *Vestnik* 2004[4]: 12; 2011[6]: 4). In addition, some indigenous church members work with Russian evangelists or have begun evangelising on their own. As a result, the outlook of congregations has considerably changed, compared to the Soviet period when believers of Slavic origin dominated. This is, for example, so in Pavel's home church in Vorkuta, where sometimes more Nenets members attend a service than Russians, Ukrainians or other non-indigenous individuals.[22]

THE CONQUEST OF THE ENDS

I would argue that the Baptist missionaries' trajectories of movement follow the logic of the conquest of the ends. In his all-terrain vehicle, Pavel made trips to the shore of the Arctic Ocean, Vaigach Island, to the northern parts of the Yamal and Gydan Peninsulas. Instead of preaching door-to-door in the cities or going southwards, he and other missionaries from Nadym, Seyakha, and Novyi Port seemed to prefer travelling as far north as possible. In other regions, the same logic seems to work. Missionaries to Chukotka who visited a coastal village said emotionally: "For the first time we saw this amazing area – the ends of the earth!" (*Vestnik* 1998[1]: 35) Or, as a Baptist author has put it eloquently, once again stressing the eschatological consequences of their work on the margins:

> On the pages of our journal there is more often news about the expansion of God's Kingdom in the distant places of the North and Far East. One's soul rejoices that God's salvation is audaciously preached "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Is not this phase of blessed work of evangelisation coming to an end? Today our evangelists carry out baptisms in the cold waters of the Barents and Okhotsk Seas. The inspired faces of those who have placed their faith in Christ are illuminated by astoundingly beautiful northern lights in Chukotka. In faraway Kamchatka, one can hear a holy oath of loyalty to God above the waves of the majestic Pacific Ocean. All this is proof that we are close to the hour when Christ's true word will be fulfilled, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come", Matthew 24:14. (*Vestnik* 1997[3]: 26)

It is noteworthy that on their trips to the periphery some evangelists preferred evangelising to members of indigenous communities rather than to newcomers (*Vestnik* 1998[1]: 34). One of the reasons for cherry-picking the indigenous individuals for evangelisation is given by an evangelist in Chukotka when answering a local official's question about whom they preach the Gospel to: "Mainly to the Chukchi who, exhausted of sinning, listen to us. The Russians consider themselves Orthodox and think they do not need reminding about God." (*Vestnik* 1999[3]: 41)

Pavel's Nenets guide and interpreter Ivan, who is well rehearsed in the new apocalyptic geography as well as in the new sense of time, told me that "at the edge of the

world" there would be at least one family everywhere witnessing in the end times. In order to stress the dimension of imminence, he said that there was *already* one "believing" nomadic family whose summer pastures were at the very end of the Yamal Peninsula, "which is the ends of the earth". In Nenets, Yamal (*ya mal*) means 'land's end'. It was as if God had made his imprint in non-Christians' language to prepare them for his eschatological plans. For the regional Baptists, Yamal has become a rhetorical favourite in their writings and sermons (*Vestnik* 1998[1]: 30). For instance, a Russian Baptist evangelist who is based in the village called Seyakha in Yamal demonstrates the significance of his mission area by playing with the notions of the beginning and the end:

> Yamal means in Nenets 'the ends of the earth' (*край земли*). Those who live here usually say that this area (*край*) is forgotten by God and people. However from which side to look? The North may turn out to be not the end of the earth but its beginning... If one may be wrong about it, then in the regard to those who are saved, to whom the Gospel has been preached, God's Word says clearly: "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first" (Matthew 19:30). The prophet Jeremiah mentions that "the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (16:19). (*Vestnik* 2008[1]: 18)

When visiting the Yamal peninsula for the first time, Pavel was overwhelmed by the expanses and the number of reindeer herding Nenets families who "have not been evangelised". He complained that "brothers" on two motor sledges had managed to do little in these vast areas. Assisted by the modern cartographic visualisation of the world's edges as well as by a global positioning system gadget, Pavel expresses readiness to take on the whole area:

> After that we shall pray "Thy kingdom come!"[23] or "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"[24] But what have we done to bring closer the fulfilment of Christ's words "shall be preached to the ends of the earth and to all nations", Matthew 24:14.[25] Obviously, God expects our participation in this work and not only in Yamal. This trip in spring opened our eyes about the geography of evangelism among the Northern peoples. God holds the doors of preaching open, and the city of Vorkuta and the local church serve as an excellent base for this work.

This kind of zeal possibly creates troubling feelings among some, as one meets two different tonalities around the notion of eschatological imminence among the Baptists. Most often the harangue addressed to the non-believers is that the apocalypse is a threat, a cause for concern for the unsaved. This is why more missionaries have to be sent out in order to save as many souls as possible before God decides to put an end to the current form of human existence. At the same time, this imminence is rhetorically anticipated and desired. The argument seems to follow the logic that when the evangelisation work is fulfilled, then Jesus will make a decision and come to punish the sinners and save the saints. By praying for the coming Kingdom, Pavel sees himself as speeding up the whole process, hastening the Second Coming of Christ.

Zolotukhin, a senior Baptist, discusses the same topic in *Herald of Truth*. Like his fellow literalists, he takes out chunks of text from the original context and uses them selectively. Zolotukhin writes:

> How to protect the holy unity, while spreading Christ's tents of love with blessings to the ends of the earth, thus bringing closer the glorious day of meeting with the Lord who loves us? The prophet Isaiah, who announces in God's name about the coming events, said: "And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth..." (5:26). Put in the context with other verses, Isaiah's words concern Israel [...]. But at the same time, for God's children of the New Testament in this separate verse has a deep meaning. Did not the Lord today open a beautiful (and the last?) opportunity to lift up an ensign not of Doom but of mercy and forgiveness in Jesus Christ for the nations from far, who live at the ends of the earth, for the abandoned, drinking and lost nations? We know that God opened doors for preaching the Gospel in this immense territory, where we happen to live because of the prayers of the saints who, having a little strength, kept the word of patience and did not deny the name of Jesus Christ in difficult times (Revelation 3:8, 10). This is why those, who have maintained faithfulness, must evangelise and convince the converts to cleave unto the Lord with sincere hearts. (*Vestnik* 1999[3]: 8)

Zolotukhin implies that the church cannot be passive but needs to do whatever it can to speed up the whole process because the church members are God's militants.[26] The motif of hastening exists in other texts as well. For instance, during the schism in 1963, Kryuchkov and Shalashov expressed the idea that God would finish the work of purification inside the church, adding that "we can hasten this victory with the unity of our actions [...]" (Kryuchkov 2008: 96). The similar idea of speeding up the flow of time with the purpose of moving closer to the final destination in time and space can be found in Pavel's mission reports.

This haste has a sociological reality. Whenever I met missionaries in the tundra, they seemed to be always in a rush, usually not staying longer than a half a day in one tent in order to talk and not so much to listen. Pavel's own accounts of mission trips also reveal the quality of hurrying across the tundra, overcoming constant obstacles on the way. Often they are less accounts of witnessing and conversion (which tend to be short and standardised), and instead are long descriptions of perilous situations on the road, including mechanical problems with their all-terrain vehicle, and threats from administrators and border guards.[27]

THE ENEMY ON THE EDGE

In the perceptions of the Russian Baptist missionaries (as well as of Russian Pentecostals, see Vallikivi 2011), the margins are challenging, not only because they are difficult to access, but also because these are full of evil forces and devil worshippers. The world's edge is a battlefield between the Enemy (*враг*) and God. A common motif I heard was that Satan and the world with him were trying to hinder those who were fulfilling Jesus' command of mission.

During a conversation at his home kitchen table in 2007, Pavel gave me an example of how evil forces tried to hold the true church back from doing their "saving work".[28] He said that recently the authorities had restricted missionaries' access to the border zone in a cunning way, which was by enlarging it from five to twenty kilometres. Pavel

claimed that this was done with the purpose of stopping God's children doing their work. Most Nenets summer camps remained in the enlarged border zone. Anyway, it was difficult to get permission to enter the restricted area with the motive of spreading the Gospel. Despite this, they continued the evangelisation trips to the shore, ignoring the danger of being caught by the border guards.[29]

It turned out to be not only a bureaucratic matter, but a part of the decisive cosmological fight, as the devil was making obstacles for the preachers to reach the literal end of the earth. As Pavel told me in 2007, the state made every effort to complicate their mission work:

> In these days, many have become interested in the Nenets as God's people. This is not without reason. We are currently heading towards the times we have had earlier – persecutions. The interest is abnormally large. Last year there were attempts to write down all the Nenets. All believers. Have you heard of that? This was done because they wanted to control God's new people. Where were they before [conversion]? Earlier nobody was interested in them. They lived without passports, without being registered. But now they are being registered.

Although the census Pavel referred to was an economic survey, according to him this was a mere smokescreen, as every kind of registration was just another cunning way of the world, i.e. Satan, to attempt to control God's children. In Pavel's and others reports, one learns that the devil is particularly active on the margins.

There is another reason why Siberia, the North and the Far East are symbolically important: specifically, because many older members of the "persecuted church" (*гонимая церковь*) were prisoners of faith in these distant places. Vorkuta, where Pavel's church is located, has a notorious Gulag history and has thus a special place in the imagination of the Unregistered Baptists. Still today many consider this a symbol of the suffering of God's people. One of the songs I heard frequently sung both by Russian and Nenets congregants was a hymn called *Infertile land, uninhabited expanses* composed in the Soviet period around the motif of prisoners of faith in Vorkuta.[30] The lyrics portray the area rather counter-intuitively to the indigenous sensibilities as "Harsh region you, the North [...] Your harsh polar elements, and the dead tundra, wild taiga. Let the whole country, vast Russia, hear the news from Christ's witnesses" (*Pesn'* 2004). In this song, Vorkuta is the place where "holy seeds" start growing and where "the soldiers of Christ" become free and "take the banner of the truth to the nations". The journal of the Union refers to the prophetic hymn: "Today with joy we can witness these words come true. The indigenous inhabitants of the Far North turn to God." (*Vestnik* 1995[3–4]: 30)[31]

Without doubt, the North occupies an important site of imagination in Russian Baptist cosmology-in-the-making. During fieldwork, I was able to observe how this cosmology was made and remade. I heard about various signs of the end here and there. Some of them, I was told, were visible and recognisable for the chosen but not for outsiders. I shall give one example. While staying in a reindeer herding camp, on a darkening afternoon in December, I admired a vista of the sky with an intense patch of light above the cloudy horizon, and even took a photo of it. The next day Pavel arrived on the church vehicle from Vorkuta. A young Russian missionary called Zhenya from Karelia accompanied him. They had seen the same vista while on their way to the herders' camp, but their interpretation, unlike mine, was not aesthetic but eschatological.

Immediately after arriving, Zhenya asked my host, a recent Nenets convert, whether he had seen the unusual light in the sky the day before. The Nenets, who must have been used to similar polar vistas, confirmed – although not too eagerly – that he had seen "something unusual". Zhenya explained that this was a sign of the approaching Second Coming. He argued that the North was an especially good place to witness it, referring to Job (37:22): "Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty." Not only did the Bible require literal reading but geographic features and atmospheric phenomena could also be read word by word, without doubt, requiring lots of creativity.

The missionary Zhenya then moved from this reference to a related topic saying that other signs existed, like Satan marking people through various forms of registration, using his number 666 and gathering them through the Internet. He said: "As it is written, before the end Satan gathers people together. This has happened via the Internet." In the imagination of the Unregistered Baptists, the world is like a huge litmus paper. It suffices to look around and see that the world as well as the majority of self-proclaimed Christians have reached a level of moral degradation characteristic of the end times (*Vestnik* 2004[5]: 8–11). The Baptist 'history of the future' is based on reading the Book of Revelations, which, as everyone admits, is difficult reading. The more knowledgeable ones, like Kryuchkov, presented the present time as "the period of the Laodicean church", being the last among seven periods and known for its wealth and corruption (*Tserkov* 2008: 57, 166; see also Bourdeaux 1968: 34). Like other "everyday millenarians", as Joel Robbins characterises this kind of Christian (2001), the signs of the end are seen everywhere, even if people have different ideas about the imminence of the arrival of Christ. At the same time, for those who evangelise in the North, the area is a source of great excitement.

THE END CHRONOTOPE

The Baptists' way of writing and speaking of the end invites a dialogue with Mikhail Bakhtin's well-known concept of chronotope in his analysis of literature. With chronotope (literally 'time-space') Bakhtin marks the inseparability of space and time when he writes:

> In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. (Bakhtin 1981: 84)

Chronotope functions "as the primary means for materialising time in space" and "as a force giving body to the entire novel" (ibid.: 250).

Bakhtin has given detailed accounts of three novelistic chronotopes: (1) the Greek romance, (2) Apuleius and Petronius, or adventure novel of everyday life, and (3) ancient biography and autobiography (1981: 86–146). In the first type, "things occur simultaneously by chance" and a human being "is deprived of any initiative" (ibid.: 105, 152). The second type centres around "the motifs of *transformation* and *identity*" which shows "*how an individual becomes other than what he was*" (ibid.: 112, 115).[32] The third type depicts someone's whole life, for instance, a life of a seeker.[33]

In Russian Baptists' writings we can meet elements from all of these three types. In their conversion stories the elements of the "adventure novel of everyday life" can be found with a stress on crisis and rebirth. In addition, in Baptists' published biographies the third type is present (for example, Boyko 2006; *Podrazhayte* 2001). In the mission reports that are under focus here, Greek romance offers the closest parallels. Bakhtin describes how in the latter "'Fate' runs the game" and the human being "*endures* the game fate plays" while his identity remains "unchanged" (1981: 105). Like a hero from a Greek romance, Pavel himself remains unchanged in his reports. For a saved person any radical change would be of catastrophic consequence. Pavel's reports contain a sequence of changes in spatial locations, which can be described as human movement that is full of ordeals. He is moved around by God, as it appears in his reports:

> People from other tents came; there were questions and answers. We understood clearly that we were taken here by God, to fulfil His Word [...].

or

> [...] we were ready for the departure but the snow storm gets stronger and we have to stay and not in vain: God knows what He does and with what purpose. We spend a whole day in one tent having an evangelical conversation, praying, and the souls open up one by one to God.

Ultimately, God decides the pace of evangelisation as well as what happens to the missionaries and whether their work is fruitful or not. This 'adventure-time' is filled with clear-cut events, often challenging ordeals and surprising encounters. Pavel endures moments of hardship and joy as well as other unexpected moments. Many of these happen on the road, which is one of the most dynamic chronotopes of all (on the road chronotope see Bakhtin 1981: 98, 243–5).

Let me give an example of a Baptist road chronotope. Depicting a mission trip on the all-terrain vehicle, in April 2003, to the Ural Mountains, Pavel gives a long and dramatic description of a near-fatal car accident in a snow storm when driving back towards Vorkuta through treacherous ravines. A Nenets guide, his head out of the vehicle's hatch, suddenly shouts to stop. The itinerants find themselves at the edge of a deep precipice, one wheel of the vehicle in the air beyond the snow cornice. Pavel writes: "Brother Viktor sat pushing against the break and clutch, and waited. We waited for God's participation and acted internally, praying." A detailed description follows of how they attached a rope for six people to hold the car back and how Pavel managed to put the car into reverse. "We began praying: 'Jesus' – my body shivered and tears began to choke – 'help us' [...] The car started moving away from the horrible boundary. This means that we shall still live and work for Him." After a while they stopped, prayed ardently, thanking God. Pavel then points out that this is a miracle: "How could the cracking snow cornice hold a three ton all-terrain vehicle and not break off? His hand is not so shortened that it cannot save."[34] There are plentiful emotional descriptions in Pavel's and others' reports in which events that are sudden and miracles happen, not unlike the way in which divine interventions take place in Greek romances (Bakhtin 1981: 93).

While the Greek romance portrays (in Bakhtin's view) its heroes as people who lack initiative and to whom things happen, the Russian Baptists' concept of human and divine agency is more complex. A background assumption is that people make

their own choices, exercising their free will, while, at the same time, God guides all the actions of a believing person and creates conditions for these actions. This old problem of human free will and God's omnipotence is never resolved in the Baptists' texts but is presented as two-fold. The usual sequence in a narrative is that somebody had achieved something, which is then followed by praise to God who is deemed to be the true author of the achievement. All this gives the missionaries' texts a specific triumphalist tone.

Characteristically, the border between human and divine agency keeps shifting in the Baptists' texts. Although the mission reports invoke images of commitment and toughness, Pavel and others never forget to attribute the true source of efficient agency to God. The description of Pavel's heroic deeds are very often interwoven with phrases that displace his own agency. Pavel knows that his own actions take on power only then when he prays to God: "At every stop we thank God and pray". Pavel also sees his own success as depending on church members' prayers to warrant the presence of the deity during his trips, or, as he declares, without these prayers his mission trips cannot be successful. The mission reports are thus not mere descriptions of events but performatives addressed both to humans and to the divine.

I would suggest that evangelising among pagans at the edge of the world is individually and collectively empowering for all the church members, and in particular the missionaries. The missionaries imagine themselves to be the church on earth with a "high mission" duty to fulfil Jesus's command of evangelisation in the end times (*Vestnik* 2000[1]: 22); they feel that they have to act "in defence and confirmation of the true evangelisation (*истинное благовествование*), as in his own time the Apostle Paul did (Philippians 1:7)" (*Vestnik* 1996[1]: 31). Pavel presents his entire life as part of a grand narrative that defines his fate as well as that of the humanity. Referring immodestly to his fearlessness in his conquest of faraway places full of evil forces and possessed people, Pavel implicitly frames himself as an apostle working at the end of time. For instance, he considers the Apostle Paul as the most important example for his own missionary activity. In one of his reports, he writes: "While on the move, I am thinking about Paul's service and his missionary trips". Undoubtedly, Pavel considers the Apostle Paul as the most important example for his own missionary activity.

The obvious meeting point of human and divine agency is through the Holy Spirit who indwells a born-again person. As a Baptist commentator has described it: "Without the Holy Spirit, any testimony is fruitless and all the efforts are in vain. When God acts in us, He gives necessary words and teaches what to say and how to speak." (*Vestnik* 1991[2]: 3) Pavel explained to me that he saw evangelical work as similar to Jesus' and the apostles' work, which is to sow the field with good seeds (words) and wait for what will happen. He explained: "It is not us who put pressure on a person. We wait for what God does inside the person's heart. Our job is to sow the field with seeds. But how they grow, we do not know. We only know that they grow as potatoes or wheat grow." Because of his success, Pavel is seen in the Union as a chosen person who is full of the Holy Spirit.

Only those missionaries who are filled with the Holy Spirit are able to convert people, as Kryuchkov stresses in his sermon on evangelisation from 1993. Not all of them are, writes Kryuchkov (2008: 315). He explains how the Holy Spirit works in a situation of evangelism with saints and sinners:

> But when God acts through us, our speech is empowered and is confirmed by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who hear. This is why all those working in spreading evangelical news have to pray for those whom their words are addressed to, for the Holy Spirit could soften their hearts and make them receptive to God's truth. And then our witnessing of Christ does not remain fruitless, but bears lots of fruit to glorify God who has redeemed us. (*Vestnik* 1991[2]: 3)

In a similar vein, Zolotukhin invites the evangelists in *Herald of Truth* to purify themselves:

> Many evangelists of our brotherhood have witnessed that before preaching God's truth to the lost sinners, they submitted themselves to God by freeing themselves from any hindering sin and only after full sanctification God used them for this glorious and great service even to the ends of the earth. (*Vestnik* 1995[1]: 41)

In his written and oral texts, Pavel presents himself as a tool who is fully aware of his own instrumentality making history on the edge of space and time with and for God. He has chosen to be at the ends of the earth, which also means that his choice was actually God's choice. This entwined concept of agency and instrumentality is a key quality in the Baptists' narratives, which, in a sense, creates productive tension through discursive oscillation: there is a constant moving back and forth between the sources of agency and authority.

Although reaching any part of the ends of the earth would be significant in missionary discourse, it is even more so in parts where Jesus is not yet known and where the missionaries can feel themselves to be pioneers in uncharted lands.[35] Pavel follows a geography of the apocalypse, which entails not only space but also time: only after the Gospel reaches the margins of the world will the second coming of the messiah be made possible. Thus, in the evangelical logic, space and time become at times interchangeable, as is presented in Pavel's phrase "ten metres" (as quoted at the beginning), entailing a reference to the imminent end of the world. One could say that metres here are not units of length but units of time. His narrative follows the concept of time, which is linear moving from the beginning to the end times, and the concept of space, which is totalising.

There are different stimuli for the missionaries to go on demanding trips in the Arctic ignoring threats by border guards, administrators, aggressive locals and the Arctic elements. This can be a sense of calling, adventure, exoticism, heroism or the ability to master technology. However, unlike for other travellers (for example, anthropologists), these elements are submitted to the end chronotope. By using Bakhtin's concept of chronotope, we can better conceptualise the evangelicals' motivation to travel to remote places in the imagined premillennial times and thus be part of a powerful narrative. Being convinced that they should not wait too long for the Second Coming of Christ, the missionaries act with the conviction that evangelist zeal at the periphery will guarantee their own and locals' salvation, at the same time speeding up the arrival of the apocalypse, which is expected with a certain trepidation.

CONCLUSION

Recently, there has been some discussions about how much the logic of Christianity and how much missionaries' own cultural setting is at play in the mission encounter and conversion (for example, Robbins 2007). The Russian Unregistered Baptists present a conservative kind of evangelism in which the biblical teachings of Christianity and their literalist interpretations are pivotal. At the same time, one could argue that these Russian Baptists hold and develop a particular interpretation tradition, which is unavoidably parochial. Furthermore, it is shaped by the historical experience of living in the Soviet Union under considerable pressure.

I have suggested above that Russian Baptists' literalism has taken them to remote places. At the same time, they have taken their literalist practices with them, indoctrinating local indigenous people in this very mode. Literalism might have important consequences for a community of Christians that desires to remain unified. The unity seems to require some kind of institutional control, for instance, through supervisions, visitations, and ordinations. In remote places, with somewhat weaker control from the outside, literalism might be a solution, or as Webb Keane has put it: "Literalism could become one way of controlling biblical interpretation in the absence of other institutional controls" (Keane 2007: 63).

Control through texts has not been important only for Protestants but also for non-religious groups in Russia. In the rest of the paper, I would like to draw out briefly a few parallels between two ideological projects aimed at the conquest of the extremes that have taken place during the last hundred years in the Russian Arctic. Despite considerable differences in the techniques and contents of the teachings as well as in the use of repressive force, it is possible to find various similarities between evangelical Christian and Soviet Communist ideologies and narratives. Both share the idea of conquering the world through societal and individual revolutions, entailing an implicit attempt at the mastery of time in its linear logic. Similarly to the evangelical missionaries, so the socialist state wished to conquer untapped areas and transform people living there into believers in their ideology. As these projects aim at totality, the conquest of the edge has a crucial role.[36]

The Soviet modernist project hoped to create a unified speech and textual community. And even those who lived on the margins had to become part of it. With this objective in mind, the early Soviets invested a great deal in the basic and ideological education of the northern natives, including the famous Liquidation of Illiteracy (*ликбез*) programme. The Soviet state's priority in the Arctic was thus not only to give a boost to the economic and military development of the Arctic, but also to Sovietise the northern indigenous groups (Slezkine 1994; McCannon 2007: 395). On the one hand, explorers sent to discover uncharted territories in the Arctic was a frequent topic in Stalinist propaganda.[37] On the other hand, 'cultural workers', or as Vladimir Bogoraz (1925: 48) christened them, "the missionaries of the new culture and of Soviet statehood" were sent to indigenous communities to 'enlighten' them (see also Leete, Vallikivi 2011a; 2011b). After Stalin's death, many ordinary people went to the North voluntarily in search of "the romance of the frontier" (Ssorin-Chaikov 2003: 20) and to earn a good salary in industrial hubs. Some of them had contact with the indigenous population, for instance, working as party agitators and moving between state reindeer herding units in order

to spread communist teachings. Over the years, the Soviet project of the mastery of the Arctic was above all economic, although to certain extent also moral, as it had to serve the overall aim of speeding up the arrival of Communism.[38]

Both the Communists and Unregistered Baptists share utopianistic concerns by preaching a bright future to its adherents, modelled through the concept of the rupture on the axis of the past and future. They read the present through the utopian future and operate on an assumption of speeding up the pace of cosmic promises, being involved in conquering space to its ends. Nevertheless, there is an internal paradox between change and non-change. When analysing the socialist temporality of the Stalinist period, Nikolai Ssorin-Chaikov (2006: 359), referring to Boris Groys and some others, has argued that socialist acceleration of time and frantic rushing on the surface actually froze time. A similar tension, although somewhat inverted, can be found among the evangelicals. The Russian Baptists preach a complete change to outsiders while claiming that true Christians are not entangled with the changing world. Pavel argued that their church would always remain the same, "early apostolic" by its nature. At the same time, in the post-Soviet period they have visibly struggled to maintain their identity, which is based primarily on martyrdom experience from the Soviet period. Heroic and self-denying missionisation in the North seems to give an opportunity to uphold a sustainable particularist identity.

The indigenous peoples in the North have seen different kinds of ideologist come and go (Russian Orthodox, Communist, Evangelical), driven by various agendas, some of them violent, others not. What is significant though, on an ideological plane, is that they have been similar in their search for productive edges, constructing 'remote' time-spaces, all these being woven into a major narrative in which the past and present are heroic and the future will be joyful.

NOTES

1 Mission reports are written for circulation in the church as well as for foreign donors.

2 Forty years ago, Thomas Beidelman observed that "Missionary studies are among the most neglected of a wide area of potential colonial research" (1974: 248). Or, as Judith Shapiro has noted, "Often, when anthropologists discussed missionaries at all, they treated them as part of the setting, much like rainfall and elevation: matters one felt obliged to mention, but peripheral to the real object of social anthropological description and analysis" (1981: 130). Among those who raised the topic of missionaries in anthropology were many committed Christians. Some of them have explicitly sided with the Christian evangelist agenda (for example, Burridge 1991; see also Tonkinson 2007).

3 The topic of missionaries and conversion in Russia and the rest of the former Soviet Union has recently gained some attention, especially because of the influx of foreign missionaries in the 1990s (for example, Wanner 2004; 2007; Rogers 2005; Pelkmans 2007; 2009; Wiget, Balalaeva 2007; Steinberg, Wanner 2008; Vaté 2009; Leete, Koosa 2012; Plattet et al. forthcoming).

4 I have carried out a year-long fieldwork trip in 2006 and 2007 as well as made five shorter fieldwork visits to the Nenets tundra between 1999 and 2012.

5 I have analysed elsewhere some of the reasons why these Nenets nomads have chosen to become evangelical Christians and also touched upon communicative aspects of mission encounter (Vallikivi 2009; 2011). In this paper, I am not focussing on the Nenets' ideas and practices

related to the evangelisation process. Nor do I discuss missionary representations of the indigenous peoples. These are the topics I hope to develop elsewhere.

6 Before the 19th century, only a few Protestants took interest in systematic evangelisation in faraway places. If we look at the Arctic in the 18th century, for instance, the Moravian Pietists engaged with evangelism among the Inuit in Greenland; in addition, Lutheran missionaries evangelised among the Saami in Lapland at that time. Non-Protestants were active as well, although their methods were less concerned with indoctrination and more with the re-identification of the local population as Christian. The Russian Orthodox Church carried out mass baptisms in the early 18th century across Siberia by command of Peter I. To the east of the Urals, most of the Nenets remained pagans, while the Orthodox Church managed to baptise the majority of the Nenets living west of the Urals in the 1820s (Vallikivi 2003).

7 Depending on the area, local indigenous people meet non-indigenous people working in the extraction industry (for example, oil and gas). Sometimes Russian traders (*коммерсанты*), who barter necessities for reindeer velvet antlers, travel to faraway camps, as this business is lucrative enough to cover high transportation costs.

8 Nomadism has always been a challenge for the administrators in the North. Between the 1930s and the 1960s, there were mobile units of culture workers (so-called 'red tents', *красные чумы*) whose task was to educate nomads in politics, culture, welfare and hygiene according to the Soviet ideological norms (Slezkine 1994; Toulouze 2011). In the post-Soviet period, there have been a few similar projects. Among those Nenets of whom the first families converted to Baptism, every summer from 1997 until 2007, for a month or two, four Nenets teachers from Naryan-Mar taught adults and children in the tundra. The Baptist missionaries had ambivalent feelings towards the project: on the one hand, literacy was regarded as useful, as this allowed people to read the scriptures; on the other hand, the Baptists denounced the Nenets teachers who tried to convince reindeer herders that the Christian missionaries were destroying their 'culture'.

9 This is the official name for the Unregistered Baptists, also known as Initsiativniki or Reformed Baptists. In 2001 'International' was added in front of the name of the Union of Churches of Evangelical Christian-Baptists (IUCECB). The acronym UCECB refers to the pre-2001 period in the text.

10 Before the 1990s, there has been only a short period of relative freedom for evangelisation in the early 1920s (Coleman 2005).

11 According to the Union's official statistics, there has been a considerable growth in adult church members – 40 473 in 1991 compared to 68 670 in 2009, (*Vestnik* 2009[6]: 7; *50 let* 2011). This number also includes members not only in Russia but also in other countries of the ex-Soviet Union as well as the members of around forty churches in the US and Canada (*Vestnik* 2009 [6]: 7). The latter are mainly made up of the Russian-speaking diaspora. In addition to the adult members, there are around forty thousand children in the Baptists' families.

12 Within the reference, the number in square brackets refers to the number of the issue of *Vestnik Istiny* (*Herald of Truth*).

13 Russia's special role in world Christianity has been propagated by the Russian Orthodox Church as well. It states that, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Moscow (or Russia) became the "Third Rome" and thus the centre of true Christianity.

14 Like many in Russia, the elite of the Union, in some of their announcements, seems to have difficulties accepting the political reality of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which created new borders. Still recently they called areas of the ex-Soviet Union "our country" (*Vestnik* 1997[1]: 21; *Vestnik* 2009[6]: 26).

15 The last sentence is a paraphrase from Psalm 90:15 (or 89:15): "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil."

16 There are several other foreign mission organisations that support missionary work among the Northern indigenous groups in Russia, for example, Missionswerk Friedensbote (http://

www.verlag-friedensbote.de/) and Hoffnungsträger Ost (http://www.hoffnungstrager-ost.de/). In addition, the Registered Baptists are involved in the missionisation of the North. For instance, in 2011, they organised a mission campaign called "Gospel to the Northern peoples" (http://baptist.org.ru/, accessed May 16, 2014).

17 In Pavel's reports, one can find detailed information on the cost of fuel, spare parts and similar. In a report from the year 2000, apparently addressed to German donors, he writes: "The cost of refuelling is 50 Deutschmarks".

18 In 2009, there were 1883 ordained ministers, including 841 presbyters, 321 evangelists, 8 teachers, 713 deacons (*Vestnik* 2009[6]: 8).

19 I have not heard or read of any plans for missionising outside the areas where they have regional associations (America, Belarus, Caucasus, Central Asia, Kharkiv, Kiev, Kursk-Ryazan, Moldova, Moscow-Volga, the North, Odessa, Rostov-Donetsk, Siberia, Ural, Western Ukraine). The American association (the only one outside the ex-Soviet Union) consisting of the émigré churches runs The Russian Evangelical Mission (based in San-Diego, California). There is only limited interest in what is going on among other Christians elsewhere in the world. Nevertheless, there have been rare calls for prayers for "God's children" in China and elsewhere who are persecuted. The fact that some Christians are persecuted seems to prove their rightfulness (*Vestnik* 1997[4]: 37; 2009 [4–5]: 17, 65).

20 This an old name for the Komi.

21 This is not a Northern minority but a Kurdish subgroup.

22 When, in 2004, a Nenets was ordained as the first presbyter in the tundra, the label "Nenets church" was sometimes used (*Vestnik* 2005[5]: 20), even if Pavel assured me that no church was ethnic (Vallikivi forthcoming). The fact that there is a church among the Nenets is rhetorically used as proof of the end times: "God continues today with the miracles that began in the times of the apostles but this time already at the ends of the earth" (*Vestnik* 2007[2]: 14).

23 From Matthew 6:10 or Luke 11:2.

24 From Revelation 22:20.

25 Pavel is not always accurate with his quotations. Despite the strict standards of literalism, Baptists create new texts by moving chunks of discourse as in any process of folklorisation. The Bible itself contains systematic variations like any other folklore text, as Alan Dundes has demonstrated (1999).

26 The idea of speeding up Jesus' return has popped up here and there in the history of the Christian mission (for example, Weaver, Brakke 2009: 166).

27 Indeed, there were a few 'less qualified' Russians who stayed for weeks with reindeer herders with the purpose of teaching Nenets converts to read and sing. Most of them were young women who were not allowed to carry out services because of their gender.

28 During the same conversation, Pavel pointed out that the previous year (2006) the Ministry of Justice had proposed to considerably restrict missionaries' rights to preach the Gospel (see Dokument 2006). He said that God had stopped this development for the time being.

29 Some other missionaries have also reported their confrontations with border guards and local officials in the restricted border zones (for example, *Vestnik* 2002[4]: 28). Interestingly, a Nenets convert told me in 2012 that border guards had recently told them to report any suspicious movement in the area.

30 The author of the lyrics is Viktor Belykh, a Christian who was in a Gulag camp in Vorkuta. The song was already known in the 1960s. I have heard a shorter and longer version of this song.

31 Already in the first years of the schism, the Church in Vorkuta was described as proof that "the light of the Gospel spreads to the ends of the earth" (*Vestnik* 1965[2]: 3).

32 Here and below all Bakhtin's emphases in italics are original (as translated by Emerson and Holquist).

33 The Bible entails texts written at the same time as some of the texts analysed by Bakhtin. I am not focussing here on possible genetic links between these but use Bakhtin's account as a heuristic tool that helps to demonstrate the role of different genres in the missionaries' texts.

34 The last sentence comes from Isaiah 59:1: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

35 Baptist missionaries argue that the Nenets are evangelised for the first time in history. When I asked what they would make of the Orthodox missions from the 18th to the early 20th century among the Nenets, Pavel was not aware of this and refuted this as not a true mission. The Russian Baptists regard the Russian Orthodox as not saved Christians and their missionary work thus as inefficient.

36 In the literature of the Stalin period, one can find depictions of how the Northern natives had reached paradise on earth lighted by the Party: "The poor Khanty understood everything and learned about everything. Many warm rays came to our taiga from Stalin-sun. And we all said to him: 'Dear Stalin, you were born by a kind mother, and you gave us happy days on the edge of a faraway land, in the virgin taiga.'" (Slezkine 1994: 298–299)

37 Georgiy Metelskiy (1959) has written a popular book titled *Yamal – kray zemli* (*Yamal – The Ends of the Earth*) where among other things he gives a survey of the conquest of the Yamal peninsula.

38 Literalist reading of the Marxist theory on developmental stages offers an interpretation that a 'primitive' Northerner in the Soviet Arctic bypassed entire developmental eras or stages like feudalism and capitalism and entered straight into socialism (Slezkine 1994: 319–323).

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HYPERBOREA: THE ARCTIC MYTH OF CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN RADICAL NATIONALISTS

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ABSTRACT*
After the disintegration of the Soviet Union Russians had to search for a new identity. This was viewed as an urgent task by ethnic Russian nationalists, who were dreaming of a 'pure Russian country', or at least of the privileged status of ethnic Russians within the Russian state. To mobilise people they picked up the obsolete Aryan myth rooted in both occult teachings and Nazi ideology and practice. I will analyse the main features of the contemporary Russian Aryan myth developed by radical Russian intellectuals. While rejecting medieval and more recent Russian history as one of oppression implemented by 'aliens', the advocates of the Aryan myth are searching for a Golden Age in earlier epochs. They divide history into two periods: initially the great Aryan civilisation and civilising activity successfully developed throughout the world, after which a period of decline began. An agent of this decline is identified as the Jews, or 'Semites', who deprived the Aryans of their great achievements and pushed them northwards. The Aryans are identified as the Slavs or Russians, who suffer from alien treachery and misdeeds. The myth seeks to replace former Marxism with racism and contributes to contemporary xenophobia.

KEYWORDS: Russia • usable past • the Aryan myth • radical ideologies • racism • anti-Semitism

The disintegration of the Soviet Union by late 1991 dealt a heavy blow to ethnic Russian consciousness that evoked nostalgia for the imperial past. Hence, a rich mythology developed dealing with the greatness of the Russian remote past as though it pre-determined a splendid future. I will discuss the development and the main characteristics of the myth, which was built up by Russian radicals over the last twenty-five years or so. I will show that it is too early to conclude that "the swastika has been forever sullied: it

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can never be used again without arousing memories of the most uncomfortable kind" (Godwin 1993: 51). Unfortunately, contemporary reality is more complicated, and dangerous Aryan ideas do not want to leave public discourse.

IN SEARCH OF A NEW IDEOLOGY

Parting with the Soviet past still causes paradoxical and unexpected outcomes. The fall of the Soviet regime was accompanied by a discrediting of not only the official Marxist-Leninist ideology but also Soviet humanitarian knowledge in general. In the last years of perestroika and at the beginning of the post-Soviet period the general public was infused with an idea that serving state ideology was the major, if not the only, task of Soviet historians. This attitude was cultivated by numerous publicists as well as amateur authors, who occupied themselves with the production of alternative history.

To be sure, Soviet historians were at the service of the state and their production had to meet its demands. Yet, at the same time, development of scholarly knowledge was only partly determined by political factors; it also partly followed its own logic. Indeed, not all the scholars (and not in all the historical fields) served the current politics. There were various scholars in the Soviet Union, and many of them focused on issues that were less connected with urgent political goals. And not all the Soviet ideas were bad; for example, the ideas of internationalism, social justice and anti-colonialism were noble.[1] Soviet internal policy was also less consistent and from time to time drastically changed its course, causing respective changes in scholarly paradigms. This is why one can find in the Soviet historiography various, and sometimes opposite, interpretations of the same historical events.

Yet, the general public was less sensitive towards the complex nature of historiography. At the same time, since the late 1980s a one-dimensional negative attitude towards professional historians and their works was fostered by popular publications and the mass media. This approach was enthusiastically followed by lay authors (writers, journalists, artists and scientists) who wanted to avoid competition with professional scholars; this is why they applauded their discrediting. Meanwhile, the Soviet identity crisis and a gradual shift to Russian (*rossiyskaya*) identity encouraged public interest in Russian history because, historically, images of the past served and still serve as very important components of identity in Russia.

While rejecting the Soviet views of the past, the general public was by no means open to the non-preconceived perception of the Western historical knowledge. People suspected that many Western historians were in the service of hostile anti-Russian politics. These attitudes emerged within an anti-Western stance that grew up after the mid-1990s.

This was especially characteristic of ethnic Russian nationalists, who manifested radical views. They were mainly educated urban dwellers, trained in natural sciences or philology and journalism, who presented themselves as the champions of the Russian people's interests. They were less satisfied with both the Soviet and Western views of history. And, since there were almost no professional historians among them and they were not trained to analyse historical documents, they had no choice but to address pre-revolutionary literature, which met their xenophobic demands.[2] It was very easy

to do just that after censorship was abolished and Russian radicals gained access to pre-revolutionary and émigré chauvinist literature which earlier had been classified. In addition, the former atheism was replaced by a revival of public interest in religion. Non-traditional esoteric teaching became popular,[3] which inherited racial views including an idea of polygeny from the nineteenth century, and these books were extensively republished in post-Soviet Russia.

Finally, a spiritual and ideological heritage from Nazi Germany enjoyed high interest in post-Soviet Russia. On the one hand, the interest was encouraged by the fact that this information was less accessible in the previous period. While suspecting that Soviet scholars distorted historical data for ideological reasons, people wanted to know the 'truth' from independent sources. On the other hand, Nazi practice suggested its own solution to the 'national issue', this being very sensitive in post-Soviet Russia with its numerous ethnic problems. Xenophobia grew quickly in Russia from the mid-1990s, and more and more ethnic Russians were displeased with what they viewed as the excessive activity of ethnic minorities, who allegedly occupied important positions in power structures and businesses (Shnirelman 2011: 239–336).[4] From this point of view, the Nazi experience was appreciated by some radical politicians and ideologists as useful and even attractive.

The Nazi experience fascinated the radical Russian nationalists most of all. Some of them openly demonstrated their admiration of Hitler, and some others, while disliking him, were open to Nazi racist ideology and practice. It is noteworthy that their negative attitude was rooted in the fact that, while having attacked the Soviet Union, Hitler, in their view, undermined racial solidarity and betrayed 'white people's' interests. At the same time, they did not object to discrimination or even genocide.[5]

The Russian nationalists admired the Aryan myth most of all.[6] Being anxious about both the identity crisis and the shaping of the Russian nation, they understood the importance of the Grand Narrative of the past, which might forge psychological and ideological basics for ethnic cohesion.[7] The more dramatic was the social and political crisis, the more a grand myth was in demand. In the late 1980s and early 1990s both liberal media and pop-literature convinced people that the Russian historical project had entirely collapsed. The Russian historical route was presented as a deadlock that had pushed Russians away from the major line of human development. This concerned all of Russia's past rather than only the Soviet period. Ancestors' lives under both autocratic and totalitarian regimes looked by no means great; certainly one could find nothing to be proud of such a past (Lakshin 1993). This view was encouraged by numerous unmasking articles as well as alternative histories that deprived well-known historical actors of their former positive images. All of this fostered public frustration, apathy and low spirits, and blocked creative activity. To put it other way, the recent and not-so-recent past did not attract people any longer.

These attitudes nourished new myths of the Slavic remote past that were built up with respect to the well-known post-colonial model. Whereas the Soviet ideology dwelt on the theory of progress and predicted a happy future, the Russian radical myth argues that the Russian people lived under colonial conditions and were heavily exploited by 'aliens' who ran the country for centuries.[8] From this point of view, the Russian radicals see both Soviet history, the history of the Russian Empire and even Medieval Russian history as a disaster. This long period is depicted as one of colonial dependency during which power was appropriated by 'aliens' who oppressed the Russians.

The aforementioned attitudes are based on the social memory of former peasants. Indeed, until recently Russia was a peasant country, and today the peasants' descendants view the elite, which ran the country for centuries, as 'alien people'. This reminds us of the well-known myth of the struggle between the Gauls and the Franks, popular in the 18th century and especially at the time of the French Revolution (Barzun 1966: 138–147, 247–248). Historically, the elite in Russia were of various origins. Therefore, they are often perceived by contemporary Russian radicals as the hateful 'International'. The radicals accuse these elites of all the misfortunes and injustices in Russia throughout the centuries, and argue that everything would immediately improve if ethnic Russians replaced the former elites. Noteworthy in this context, Russianness is treated in biological terms and explicitly associated with 'pure blood'.

In addition, whereas the postcolonial model associates a decline with colonial oppression, the Russian myth points to the baptism of Rus'. The myth views Christianity as an alien ideology that was developed by malicious agents in order to enslave the 'Slavic Aryans' spiritually. The Christian period is associated with the dark ages of the Piscean era and presented as a time in which genuine Russian traditions were persecuted. A reference to the Piscean era reminds us of the esoteric teaching that informs the myth in question. Evidently, an in-group–out-group opposition plays a crucial role in this discourse. 'Alien' is presented in ethnic terms and employs such negative connotations as bad, hostile, scary, vile, and unacceptable.[9]

THE RETURN OF THE ARYAN MYTH

The more the modern period is cast unfavourably, the greater is the aspiration to oppose it with some splendid antediluvian past associated with the Golden Age. Ancient people are viewed as robust, noble, reliable, truthful, courageous, generous, skilful, knowledgeable and wise. They developed a grand culture and built up a high civilisation on a northern island named Arctida, or Hyperborea, situated in the Polar region. According to the myth, the inhabitants were "white people, the Aryans". Allegedly they enjoyed a mild sub-tropical climate in the primordial period and felt as though they lived in Paradise. Later on, because of a natural catastrophe, they had to move southwards. On the one hand, they brought higher culture with them, while on the other, they became victim to a miscegenation that led to decline and degradation.

This myth is based on occult beliefs that are rooted in Helene Blavatsky's Theosophy.[10] Blavatsky argued that the first three "root-races" had ethereal shape, and only beginning with the fourth did humanity obtain physical bodies. Blavatsky placed the Second Race on the continent of Hyperborea, which allegedly existed somewhere near the North Pole. She found the Third Race in a southern continent named Lemuria, and the Fourth Race (the "Lemurian-Atlanteans") was associated with the first historical land of Atlantis, thought to have sunk 12,000 years ago. It was there that humanity obtained physical bodies. At the same time, Blavatsky depicted the Paleolithic inhabitants of Europe as Atlanteans who preserved their "pure blood". (Blavatskaya 1991: 5–9, 192)

Every new race emerged within the previous one. In this way, the most evolved, Lemurian, race gave birth to the Aryans, called the Fifth Race by Blavatsky, who argued

that they accounted for the great bulk of contemporary humanity. She also maintained that Europe was their homeland. In her view, what remained from the previous race mixed with the new one, and it is in this way that the diversity of human physical types emerged. Blavatsky identified the Fourth Race as the "sons of Giants", and the Fifth as the "sons of Gods" (Blavatskaya 1991: 278–280). She argued that they waged bloody wars with each other (an idea borrowed from the French occult author Fabre d'Olivet). Sometimes she defined race by skin colour, according to which the "sons of Giants" proved to be "black" and the "sons of Gods" "yellow". Moreover, while emphasising the great role of spirituality, she ascribed certain distinct moral and behavioural characteristics to every race. For example, the "Lemurian-Atlanteans" proved to be "malicious sorcerers", whereas the Aryans had noble moral features. Noteworthily, according to Blavatsky, the "early Aryans" enjoyed the "Vedic faith", which they imposed on the "remnants of the Lemurian-Atlantean peoples". Allegedly those beliefs made up the basis of all contemporary world religions including "Judeo-Christianity". (Blavatskaya 1992: 606) Thus, Blavatsky's concept contained a messianic idea as well as an idea of a master race (if only embryonic), although at the same time it called for universal brotherhood. This concept also included eschatology, with a transition from one race epoch to another inevitably accompanied by a terrible natural cataclysm.

Blavatsky's concept was informed by the European esoteric tradition that was shaped partly by 'astral visions' and partly by interpretation of various archaic myths. It also incorporated a teaching of the succession of the four races (Red, Black, White and Yellow) closely connected with certain continents and epochs (Lemurian, Atlantean, Ethiopian and White). According to occult views, every race built up and ruled a huge empire with numerous colonies. Each rule lasted for 12,500 years and finished with a natural catastrophe, after which a new cycle began and was associated with a new race. Allegedly, this development was under the control of higher powers (teachers). Thus, all the major historical events were predetermined, and various peoples developed according to well-established rules.

Certain occult authors argued that the White Race was the youngest on Earth. It emerged in the White Sea area – the homeland of its ancestor the Hyperboreans. Allegedly, the Black Race ruled during that epoch, when it expanded northwards up to southern Europe, including southern Russia, and subjugated both White and Yellow Races. Later on, the Whites became stronger and, under Rama's rule, pushed the Blacks back to the south. After that, Rama built up a huge empire embracing all the lands between North Africa and Japan. Some Whites resettled in Asia Minor and Western Europe, and gave birth to the Aryans. Notably, the term Aryans was also used by occult authors for all Whites in general. They argued that a racial miscegenation led to degradation and degeneration that was a common trend in human history (Papus 1912–1913; Shure 1914). An idea about the lethal results of miscegenation was borrowed from racial theory, which was popular in the late 19th century.

In many respects the myth in question reminds us of the Nazi Aryan myth (Cecil 1972). It is well known that the Nazi Party grew out of the occult Thule Society, and when in power the Nazis made strenuous efforts to make scholars confirm the 'Aryan idea'. Thus, many hybrid versions appeared that combined occult beliefs with scholarly and pseudo-scholarly concepts. This project failed to produce any consistent view of anthropogenesis and ethnogenesis. Yet, in due course, 'Nordic Man' has forced 'Aryan

Man' to the margins of mythology. In addition, whereas initially when talking of race wars the occult myth was based on colonial reality and created opposition between Aryans, i.e. Whites, and Blacks, the Nazis made an allegedly eternal struggle between Aryans and Semites the core idea of the myth.[11] In addition to the race war, another universal factor in human history was identified as endless migrations as though they could explain all cultural changes. This obsolete reductionist view of historical process is still inherent in the myth.

In the late 20th century the Aryan myth was revived in Russia by occult scientists, Neo-Pagans and radical Russian nationalists, who did their best to make it the basis of the 'national idea' in order to consolidate the Russian people, to awake them from apathy and to provide them a new admirable rationality. One of the influential leaders of this ideological current was an 'Aryan astrologist' Pavel Globa (1995), who had already proved to be a zealous advocate of esoteric teaching in the 1980s. And, whereas between the 1970s and 1980s Russian radicals were searching for the Aryan homeland in the Eurasian steppe, in the Balkans, in Asia Minor,[12] and even in Arabia (Kandyba, Kandyba 1988: 12), from 1991 onwards they were attracted to the idea of the Northern Motherland, Hyperborea-Arctida. Evidently, they were shocked with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and dissociated themselves from the 'Southern Peoples' and turned to megalomania combined with the idea of the North.

Ever since the ideas of the 'Aryan nature' of the Slavs, a blooming Aryan Polar homeland and the emergence of the human civilisation during Aryan expansion from the North became unusually popular. The myth claims that the White People perfectly adapted to the changing natural environment during the last Ice Age, and that this made them superior with regard to the more specialised Yellow and Black people. Therefore, immediately after the retreat of the ice sheet the White people, who previously lived in northern Europe, began to spread out extensively southwards and eastwards where they brought their religion and writing system and established numerous civilisations.

Among those who have restored this myth were a professional Indologist, Natalia Guseva (1991: 3–27; 1994: 6–20; 1998), an engineer, Gennadiy Razumov (Razumov, Khasin 1991: 57–67), an Islamic traditionalist, Haydar Jemal' (1992), and Alexander Dugin (1993),[13] a devoted admirer of Julius Evola and a zealous adherent of the New Right. Many contemporary Russian Neo-pagans also favour the myth.[14] The myth of the Aryan ancestors, who allegedly expanded from the heart of Eurasia and established ancient civilisations, was picked up by certain Russian politicians (Bakov, Dubichev 1995: 23–29), businessmen (Surov 2001: 146) and admirers of 'Russian civilisation', who ascribe "Hyperborean Aryan roots" to it (Mozhaiskova 2001: 464–485).

Contemporary Russian communists are also not indifferent towards the Aryan idea. In the late 1990s it was picked up by the pro-Communist newspaper *Patriot* (formerly *Soviet Patriot*). The myth of the 'Slavic Aryans' was presented in detail by Alexander Uvarov, then one of the leaders of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) faction in the State Duma and also a deputy chairman of the Executive Committee of the People's Patriotic Union of Russia run by the CPRF (Uvarov 1998; 2000). Former leader of the Russian Communists, Ivan Polozkov, also demonstrated his sympathy towards the Aryan myth (Polozkov 1998).

One can find other admirers of the Aryan myth among the members of the Russian Parliament as well. One of them was racial politician, Andrei Savelyev, who was elected

in 2003 as a member of the Rodina Party and for a few years was a deputy chairman of the Committee on the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Affairs and Contacts with Compatriots. While occupying himself with building up the Great National Narrative, he referred to the "most ancient civilization" named Hyperborea as though it was developed by the White people in the Far North. He was upset with its collapse and claimed that the White people had to move southwards in order to fulfil their "civilizing mission". He argued that the Russians managed to avoid miscegenation and maintain the genetic heritage they received from their Aryan ancestors. (Kolyev 2003: 364–368)

THE RUSSIAN ARYAN MYTH AND ITS GENERAL FEATURES

The Russian myth identifies Aryans with Slavs, or Russes, rather than with Germans. The Russes are presented as the forefathers of the White Race, and all the other 'white people' are viewed as their younger brothers. Sometimes the great majority of the contemporary peoples are identified as the descendants of the "one and the same proto-Russian ethnos", and the Russian language as the human mother tongue (Kandyba 1995: 93, 107, 109, 125; Kandyba 1997: 4; Petukhov 2001; 2003). In some versions, the Russes are also related to the non-Russian peoples of Eurasia who belong to the Yellow Race (Danilov 1996; Kandyba 1997: 414–417; Asov 2008: 281–284). Or the argument is that migrants from Arctida found their first refuge in Siberia, from where the Siberian Rus' emerged (Kandyba 1997; Gusev 2000: 174–175; Novgorodov 2006). In this way, the myth legitimates the Russian claim that all Eurasian territory between the Baltic Sea and the Kuril Islands is their historical heritage. The myth does not stop at that and points to the Slavic Aryan expansion into Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, India, China and even the Americas, as though the newcomers established civilisations and empires there in prehistoric times. Some authors argue that the prehistoric 'Aryan empire' encompassed about half the world. When conquering new lands, the Aryans waged wars against the Black Race. Indeed, according to the myth, the Blacks dominated on the Earth in the previous epoch and were destined to be forced out to Africa by the younger Aryan people. This is an evident borrowing from Theosophy. Yet, today some Russian radicals want to modernise this idea and claim that the Black Race deliberately went to America to be slaves there in order to take revenge upon the White Race today for defeat in the prehistoric past (Gusev 2000: 260).

The Aryan myth is still based on the idea of polygeny, and many of its advocates view human races as separate biological species. For example, according to the occult scientist Viktor Kandyba, there were two different centres of anthropogenesis: the southern or African, where the Black Race emerged, and the northern or Arctic, which was a homeland of the Yellow Race. He argued that the Black Race emerged many millions of years later than the Yellow and was of no value for humanity. Human evolution is identified with an extensive expansion of the Yellow Race, who, firstly, pushed the Black Race far to the south, and secondly, gave birth to the White Race in Europe. In due course Kandyba began to present the "earliest Russes" as White rather than Yellow. As a result, it became unclear where the representatives of Yellow Race were from, although they looked friendly and, in contrast to the Black Race, the Russes did not force them out of their lands. (Kandyba 1997: 3, 13, 15; Kandyba, Zolin 1997: 18, 21, 24)

Yet, a struggle between the White and Black Races proves to be a subsidiary theme to the myth in question and does not play any great role. In contrast, a confrontation between the Aryans and the Semites is emphasised, which makes the contemporary Russian Aryan myth much closer to the Nazi one. The myth depicts the Aryans and the Semites as not only different in culture but radically different in origin because they are associated with different races. In addition, the conflict has changed its spatial dimensions: what was looked at as a West vs. East opposition during the colonial epoch is depicted today in terms of North vs. South. Russia feels itself to be more comfortable within this paradigm. Indeed, it does not focus on the suffering caused by its ambiguous position between West and East, but is identified precisely with the North, which means with a genuine primordial North. Today it is in the Russian Polar areas that enthusiasts are searching for the traces of Arctida-Hyperborea and its perished first civilisation. The myth builders believe that the homeland of the legendary Aryans was situated in Russia, and argue proudly that refugees of this race began their great movement in Russian territory.[15] It is in this way that Russia becomes a cradle of both the White Race and civilisation. In the view of Russian radicals and occult thinkers, this makes Russia the vanguard of humanity, as though she will rescue the White Race from dying out.

The myth is based on the idea of cyclical time. The decline will end with a catastrophe, after which, in the Aquarian era, a new Golden Age will begin with the emergence of the new Sixth Race. Russian occult scientists teach people that the Aquarian era is associated with Russia. It is Russia that would collect 'White people' and rescue them from the coming world catastrophe, and it is there that the new race will shape itself and a new cycle of development begins.

How did the Aryans, who are depicted by the Russian radicals as the vanguard of humanity, get into this deep crisis? It is here that one is informed of the race struggle, which serves Russian radicals a universal explanation for all human history. And it is here that the Russian Aryan myth demonstrates its similarity with the Nazi myth. Indeed, both groups identify the major metaphysical enemy as the Jews or 'Semites', who are ascribed a racial nature. Some Russian authors make no distinctions between these populations, but some others argue that it is their difference that explains the very essence of history.

The Russian radicals view the Semites as another race distinct from the Whites and associate them with the perfidious and hateful South. They identify them with an evil agent who allegedly blocked the progressive development of the Aryans and their wonderful civilisations and began to push them northwards while appropriating all their achievements. They explain the so-called 'distinct characteristics' of the Semites with a reference to their mixed origins from the White and Black Races, as though that deprived them of creativity and made them occupy themselves with the appropriation of alien achievements. Yet certain radical authors put the Jews in a special category and argue that they were a product of some experiment carried out by Egyptian priests. They present them as an artificial population, or bio-robots. Thus, they deprive them of human nature and, especially, of positive moral qualities. Today, many Russian radicals believe that, while creating that group, the Egyptian priests had some special goals in mind. For example, radical writer Yuri Petukhov (2008) argued that the Jewish settlement in Palestine was a purposeful project of the priests, who wanted to build a durable shield against any expansion by "Asiatic barbarians".[16]

While reviving a scheme constructed by racist Houston Chamberlain at the end of the 19th century, the Russian radicals present all the major ancient civilisations of the Near East, beginning with Egypt and Sumer, as products of Aryan, Slavic or Russes' creative activity.[17] In this narrative, both the Egyptian pharaohs and the Israeli kings David and Solomon are depicted as Aryans. They are presented as great builders of ancient states and empires and producers of the outstanding cultural achievements (which is true, although they were not Aryan). The most ancient inhabitants of Palestine are identified as Indo-European, as though they were closely related to the Slavs; allegedly these ancient inhabitants included the Canaanites (whom scholars identify as Semites), and later even Jesus Christ. The authors in question are obsessed with the early Semitic or simply 'Jewish' invasions as encroachments on Indo-European (or even Slavic) territory. The invaders are depicted as either brutal aggressors (Bezverkhiy 1993; Antonenko 1994; Kandyba 1997; Asov 1998), or peaceful traders and marginal impoverished ethnic groups that settled in the ancient cities and gradually forced the natives out (Petukhov 2008).[18] In either case Aryans suffered because of this and had to retreat northwards as their former territories had been settled by Semites and other 'aliens'. As a result, a genuine culture fell into decline, and ancient civilisations collapsed.

One can come across more extravagant versions of such a collision as well. For example, an esoteric Moscow philosopher, Valery Demin, interpreted an innocent Russian folk tale about a pockmarked hen as a recollection of the most ancient times, when Indo-Europeans fought to the death against the Semites. He located the battlefield in the Far North, where, he said, the "homeland of humankind" was situated. In his view, the Indo-European migration southward was a result of the defeat. Thus, a "Semitic assault" was dated to the Paleolithic era. (Demin 1997: 363–365; 1999: 108, 169, 296–298)

A more sophisticated version argues that a permanent expansion of the political arrangement – called either the Eurasian project (Shiropayev 2001) or the First Empire (Khomyakov 2003) – was introduced by the Semites rather than being a Semitic expansion itself. This arrangement was allegedly imposed by the Semites upon the naïve Aryans, who were less experienced in politics but who borrowed this system, causing endless misfortune. Therefore, in contrast to other Russian nationalists who are obsessed with Empire, the proponents of this view reject the contemporary state as Semitic heritage and call for the disintegration of Russia, if only to replace it with smaller purely ethnic Russian polities.

Certain radical authors represent the Jews as the Russes' younger brothers who lost their true way (Kandyba 1995: 144, 151, 157–160; Vashkevich 1996: 24, 38, 88, 225). For example, Viktor Kandyba (1997) reproduced the myth of the Kike-Masonic conspiracy as though it was rooted in King Solomon's reforms. He constructed irreconcilable conflict between the northern and southern Russes, the latter being identified with the Jews ('Rusalims') as though they persistently wanted to rule the world. Yet he focused mainly on the Christian period and accused the Jews of an introduction and dispersion of inhuman ideology, by which he meant Christianity.

Russian radicals tirelessly wage a symbolic war against the Jews and do not fail to argue that Slavic culture is much older and richer than Jewish culture. In this context, it is the Russians who are called the 'chosen people' while Jewish culture and history are permanently belittled. In particular, the radical authors argue that the Jews borrowed all their knowledge from the Russes-Aryans and that Judaism was shaped at the basis

of the old Vedic religion, which was the genuine Aryan heritage (Emelyanov 1979: 7, 25–27, 46; Vashkevich 1996: 24, 38, 88, 225; Petukhov 1998: 19; Istarkhov 2000: 12, 53–54, 132, 139). When accusing the Semites of an appropriation of the Russes' cultural heritage, these authors do not fail to appropriate foreign gods, ascribing them to the Slavic tradition. They also generously endow the early Slavs with alien territories and include various non-Slavic groups in their composition. In addition, they also borrow ideas, themes and even prayers from both Old and New Testaments.

These authors are passionately 'discovering' traces of allegedly persistent confrontation between the Aryans and the Semites in order to confirm the racial view of history. Indeed, they interpret contemporary development as a direct result of the same 'Semitic expansion'. One of them goes so far as to paraphrase Stalin's argument on the aggravation of the class war with a transition to socialism. He claims that, "the war of Gods aggravates with a transition to the New Age [of Aquarius]" (Istarkhov 2000: 319). He calls for a Russian revolt against the Jews and presents Russian Paganism as the main weapon of the struggle.[19]

Russian radicals represent immigrants as the forerunners of decline and collapse as though the immigrants want to force out native inhabitants, to appropriate their vital resources, deprive them of all their cultural achievements and establish a new order. In brief, these radicals are informed by the well-known xenophobic anti-immigrant myth (Shnirelman 2008), although they provide it with a universal meaning and push it back into the remote past. For example, a Neo-Pagan leader Alexander Belov (2000; 2003: 35–46) discovered similar processes in the most ancient "Aryan past" and even in the "Aryan homeland". And Yuri Petukhov (2008: 204–205; 2009: 258–259, 271, 305, 313) referred to this argument to explain a decline in all ancient civilisations in the Near East.

It is in this way that the Russian radicals actively use Aesopian language: when describing what has allegedly happened in the remote past, actually they point to the contemporary social issues that alarm them. Moreover, they suggest their own solutions to these problems. For example, Belov (2000) argues that, to survive, one has to consolidate people, to build up a cohesive community, to elect a chief and to develop extensive knowledge. And for the chief to be out of reach of any criticism one has to proclaim him God.

Whereas nationalists of the 19th century were happy with an image of the medieval ancestors, contemporary Russian radicals are obsessed with the prehistoric past and refer to contemporary achievements in archaeology and comparative linguistics.[20] Their point of departure is the origins of *Homo sapiens* and particular human races, rather than the origins of state or an emergence of civilisation. Moreover, they make great efforts to identify the Palaeolithic Cro-Magnon people with the Russes. For that the Russes are represented as the very root of the White Race as well as the forefathers of all other European peoples. They are also depicted as both the builders of the first civilisation and as civilisers.

To put it another way, numerous contemporary epigone myth-builders integrate scraps of former esoteric beliefs in all possible combinations. Time and again they refer to the 'Aryan issue' and turn Blavatsky's Aryans into Slavic Aryans or even Ancient Russes. In addition, whereas Blavatsky argued that Aryans began to give way to the Sixth Race in the modern epoch, contemporary Russian occult scholars associate this crucial transformation with a transition from the Piscean Era to the Age of Aquarius

as though the 'evil epoch' of *Kali Yuga* would end at that time and a new Golden Age (*Satya Yuga*) would begin. For many of them, this provides Russia a special mission because the Russians are the direct descendants of the "bright Aryans" and the Russian language has to unite all people on the Earth in a highly integrated "World Community" (Dmitriyeva 1992: 36–41). While doing that, some of Blavatsky's followers want to deliver her constructions from obvious contradictions and inconsistency, and at the same time try to revive polygenism together with its racist outcomes (Dmitriyeva 1992: 195–197; 1994: 321). It is in this way that they restore an obsolete race theory. Yet, most esoteric teachers are dreaming of uniting humanity as one and the same Aryan race. In contrast, Neo-Nazis (including Russian radicals) aim to disintegrate humanity while at the same time providing Aryans a privileged position.

While building up an esoteric myth, Blavatsky incorporated some ideas that were popular in the contemporary scholarly and quasi-scholarly milieu and, thus, the final product seemed to be a scholarly concept. Yet, as occurs with any religious doctrine, in due course the myth stagnated, whereas scholarship kept on developing. To put it other way, the myth has lost any links with academic knowledge and became the basis of the faith, although it secured a pseudo scholarly terminology. That is why, while it does not attract scholars, it is very popular among lay people who lack the necessary scholarly experience, cannot process the scientific materials and are unable to scrutinise the scholarly constructions. Instead, their ideas are usually based on nationalist or patriotic ideas, i.e. they make efforts to meet ideological demands.

Until the mid-1990s the Aryan myth found room only in marginal national-patriotic publications and some crank periodicals (*Nauka i Religia, Svet: Priroda i Chelovek*). Yet, it began invading the book market from the late 1990s. At the beginning of the 21st century even certain well-known publishing houses (EKSMO, Yauza, Algorithm, Veche, FAIR-PRESS, and the like) did not fail to publish thick volumes and even series that contain various versions of the Aryan myth. Today one can find this myth within two literary genres: firstly, pseudo-scholarly works presented as alternative history, and secondly, belles-lettres. The idea of a northern homeland is repeated by numerous authors in hundreds of publications, including those of various Russian nationalist movements and Neo-Pagan communities, as well as all-Russian popular journals and science fictions from alternative authors and novels in the fashionable fantasy style. It is worth noting that some authors successfully work in both genres and use the novels to introduce or to discuss exotic or extravagant ideas that seem inappropriate in the context of alternative history. The print runs are usually 5,000 for each book, and many such books are published and re-published by one or several publishing houses. Their authors are very prolific – some of them publish one or even several books every year. Finally, today Hyperborea is a fashionable theme on Russian TV, especially the REN TV Channel.

CONCLUSIONS

It is no accident that Aryans appeared in the discourse of radical Russian nationalism. This movement's ideologists believe that it is impossible to wake the masses and to involve them in extensive political activity without affecting their imagination with the

help of romantic ideas and attractive heroic images. They search for those ideas and images not in Russian history but in esoteric heritage and in Nietzsche's idea of a superman, which was used extensively by the Nazis. These authors argue that new Russian 'national-oriented' elite has to appropriate a heroic style. In search of this style they address the Aryan myth as well as fantasies about the northern homeland Hyperborea (Eliseyev 1995; Yashin 2006: 55–59). The myth of the Russes-Aryans is very popular among radical Russian nationalists. In particular, in the early 1990s it fascinated the then leader of the radical group Russian National Unity (RNU) Alexander Barkashov (1993), who identified the Aryans with the White Race and presented the Russians as the "most direct both genetic and cultural descendants of the Aryans". At the same time a rapid numerical growth in the number of publications focused on the Aryan myth occurred in the late 1990s when Russia experienced a financial crisis and a painful re-distribution of property that gave the impression of the aggravation of the struggle between the Aryans and the Semites. Ever since, political life in Russia has degenerated and many former radical political activists have shifted to the sphere of literature, which provides them a channel to introduce their ideas to the general public.

Why does this Aryan myth seem attractive in contemporary Russia? Firstly, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and separation of the southern republics, the new Russian borders have shifted northwards and Russia felt itself a northern country. Thus, the 'Nordic idea' met the urgent demands. Secondly, a localisation of the pristine Human homeland on Russian territory provides Russia a valuable symbolic capital while making it allegedly a sacred place where humanity was born. Thirdly, from this point, despite their historical migrations, Russians prove to be an indigenous people who have lived in the territory of the primordial homeland for millennia, rather than being newcomers. Fourthly, it is tempting to present Russians as a proto people, a mother people who gave birth to many others including, most importantly according to this logic, Europeans. In this case, Russians do not seem to be strangers, bearers of some different characteristics, in Europe. Quite the opposite, they belong to the European family of peoples, and therefore are able to develop their social and economic life no less successfully than other Europeans. Moreover, as the mother people, they are destined to be successful because Europeans inherited their characteristics from this mother people. Fifthly, some inborn qualities are meant by 'characteristics', and thus the views in question are closely connected with racial theory. In this context, Russians belong to the White Race and, more specifically, to the Aryans.

It is here that we reveal the image of the Aryans as a people who were bearers of some special qualities that distinguished them from all the other humans with respect to their physical appearance. These qualities make Aryans more perfect than all other people, and therefore they are destined to play the role of civilisers and builders of great civilisations. Moreover, this image is informed by the concept of polygeny, which, firstly, treats various races as distinct biological species and, secondly, argues that they originated from different ancestors and in different regions. A conclusion is that various races have different abilities for the development of culture and that their development is restrained by their biological nature. Therefore, Russian radicals demand a "maintenance of the human racial division", within which the Slavs occupy a deserved place among the Whites (Kandyba, Zolin 1997: 350). It is clear that this 'racial order' would leave no room for any mixed marriages, which is the dream of the aforementioned racist authors.

To be sure, at first glance all of this brings us back to the classical racial theory of the late 19th and early 20th centuries with their belief in the white man's mission. Yet, the contemporary concept depicts 'white humans' as colonised rather than colonisers. And it is the Russians who are presented as the vanguard of the white humans. It is they who have to rescue white humans from decline and extinction. However, one deals not only with the white humans. In some versions of the Aryan myth the Russians are represented as relatives of not only Europeans but also of those Asians who live in the territory of Russia. The myth emphasises a long common past that integrates the peoples within one and the same community. To be sure, this approach undermines the purity demanded by racial theory, yet it also beneficially uses some Eurasian ideas that reinterpret Russians as not conquerors but as people indigenous to all Russian territory rather than only the European part. In addition, this approach consolidates Russia as a well-integrated nation. Therefore, Petr M. Zolin claims that his co-author, Kandyba's, books "encourage the common self-awareness of the peoples of Russia just as the *Rossiyane*, who for millennia had to resolve the same general problems with respect to all the outside world" (Kandyba, Zolin 1997: 296). At the same time it is also evident that the Aryan myth provides Russia with a new universal doctrine, which contradicts the idea of a well-defined nation.

In addition the Aryan myth's popularity deals with the territorial integrity of the country, as though it is threatened by non-Russian minorities. It also legitimises territorial expansion. Indeed, the myth of a homeland in the North disconnects Russian identity from any well-bounded territory, making it senseless to talk of any territorial borders. Hence, any territorial expansion is possible. At the same time, Russian radical nationalists emphatically reject any accusations of such an expansion. Instead they claim that all the territory of Russia is primordial Russian territory. By the 'remote past' they mean all of Indo-European prehistory, which is treated as Aryan history and ascribed to the Slavic-Russes.

Finally, Aryan heritage helps to identify an external enemy in order to blame that enemy for all contemporary Russian misfortunes. In contrast to the more simple Nazi myth, today the enemy is identified as 'an international horde of southerners' consisting mainly of former Soviet compatriots coming to Russia as labour migrants. Yet the myth does not fail to point to the Jews as the driving force of this migration as though they intentionally use it to subjugate Russians, to deprive them of their vital natural and economic resources, and even culture and identity. In this context the Jews are depicted as an external force, or the fifth column, rather than as Russian citizens. Within the Aryan myth they are identified with Absolute Evil, and radical writers make efforts to demonstrate that they played this role throughout the human past including prehistory. Thus, in contrast to Soviet dogma, the view of the past has drastically changed, and social forces of development are replaced with racial ones.

From this perspective, a rehabilitation of the swastika is worth noting. In the view of many Russian nationalists, the swastika symbolises an inherent attribute of Russian traditional culture from 'Hyperborean times'. In fact, this rehabilitation is undertaken intentionally to revise the swastika's dreadful role in the history of the 20th century as the symbol of a struggle for racial purity, with all its tragic results. It is well known that in Nazi propaganda the swastika was a symbol of aggression aimed at the Jews. Contemporary Russian Neo-Nazis manifest the same attitudes: the Aryan swastika is

in conflict with the Star of David. Today the swastika fascinates Russian skinheads, who are the major consumers of Aryan ideology, which pits them against the Others, primarily immigrants.

The Arctic Aryan myth has a great symbolic value for Russian radicals. They hope that the current identity crisis might be overcome by linking Russians with a new Hyperborean, or Aryan identity. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Shnirelman 2007), one can discover an archetype here, an aspiration for an absolute principle: an absolute centre of the world (i.e., the North Pole), as well as an absolute beginning in time (hence the desire to identify one's ancestors with the Paleolithic primordial people). This image is obviously ambivalent. It includes, on the one hand, an idea of isolationism, which is inherent in Russian nationalism (the unique origin of the ancestors up to extraterrestrials – according to some versions of the Aryan myth, the ancestors arrived at the North Pole from another planet), and on the other hand, imperial universalism manifested as Russian Messianism (Russians as the ancestors of all peoples, or of only the white Race, and as the builders of culture and all early civilisations). This identity has attractive attributes: the northern people are robust, courageous, reliable, truthful, and generous, have a deep knowledge of the world, and so on. The message is as follows: the Russian people enjoyed a great past; hence, they are destined to have a great future.

As we can see, the other features of the Aryan myth are hyper-migrationism and cyclic theory. It views the Russian past as endless peaks and troughs – the formation of the largest world empire, encompassing all Eurasia if not half of the Old World, and its subsequent collapse and disintegration into numerous peoples and states that waged bloody wars with each other. Allegedly, these cycles repeated time and again throughout history. Adhering to this concept allows people to aspire to several goals. Firstly, it justifies empire and makes it a permanent and significant element of human history; secondly, it legitimises Russian claims to all the territories of the former Russian empire or Soviet Union; and thirdly, it gives hope for the restoration of the all-embracing and powerful Russian state in its full might.

The myth objectivises history, while providing it with a teleological essence. In contrast to Hegel, who argued that human history climaxed in the German people, contemporary Russian radicals go much further. According to Viktor Kandyba, "a development of the Russians is viewed as the major and necessary integral part of the All-Cosmic evolution of God and God-like [essence] in unrealized reality" (1997: 415). Thus, in this version of the Aryan myth, all human history begins and ends with the Russian people. This view is shared by many Russian radicals and nourishes the messianic idea.

NOTES

1 Here I discuss only ideology rather than practice.

2 For an acknowledgement of this fact by one of the participants, see Gusev 2000: 49–50, 96.

3 On the popularity of occult ideas among Soviet intellectuals, see Rosenthal 1997 and Menzel et al. 2012.

4 One could observe various sorts of xenophobia in Russia over the last two decades, including Russophobia. In this article I focus on the radical views of ethnic Russian nationalists. For the politics of the past among some other peoples in Russia and elsewhere, see Shnirelman 2001; 2005; 2006; 2009.

5 See, for example, Shcherbakov 1991: 135; Khomyakov 2006: 14–17, 68–71. For a discussion of those ideas, see Yanov 1987: 158; Moroz 2005: 34.

6 On the origins and history of the Aryan myth, see Poliakov 1974; Olender 1992; Godwin 1993; Figueira 2002.

7 One of them has even defended a PhD thesis on the political myth (see Kolyev 2003).

8 See, for example, Shtepa 1991–1992; Ostrovsky 2001; Shiropayev 2001; Khomyakov 2003.

9 It is no accident that this is reflected in the very titles of the respective books (cf. Khomyakov 2003; Savelyev 2007).

10 For Blavatsky's race theory, see Godwin 1993: 19–20, 41–43.

11 Austrian Aryosophy played the key role in this transformation (see Goodrick-Clarke 1985).

12 For this, see Shnirelman 1995; Shnirelman, Komarova 1997.

13 In 1991 Dugin made an attempt to establish a journal called *Giperboreyets*, but failed.

14 For this, see Shnirelman 2007.

15 This has been thoroughly discussed in Shnirelman 2007.

16 It is noteworthy that attempts to distance the Jews from the human species were taken in Russia already in the pre-revolutionary period. For example, the newspaper *Novoye vremya* presented the Jews as some "faked humans" (Stolypin 1911).

17 About the methodological difficulties in proto-Afrasian and proto-Indo-European reconstructions see, for example, Militarev, Pejros, Shnirelman 1988; Militarev, Shnirelman1988; Mallory 1997.

18 It is worth noting that ten years earlier Petukhov (1998: 19–21) shared a traditional view of the 'Semitic invasion'.

19 In 2008 this book, which is very influential among Russian Neo-Pagans, was recognised by the Russian court as an "extremist work" and its distribution was banned. Nonetheless, its author's lectures are easily accessible on the Internet.

20 Belov's novel on the ancient Aryans was provided with the telling abstract: "The Aryan topic, full of genuine scholarly studies, allows, contrary to preconceived opinion, to extend the borders of historical self-determination of the Russian people, to enrich their spiritual-moral state" (Belov 2000).

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